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JANUARY: 1894:

Comfort's Nutshell Story Club.

Filling one of Comfort's Prize Stories.

$100.00 PRIZE STORIES $100.00

The following conditions will hereafter govern the awarding of cash prizes for Nutshell Stories, and the manuscripts of such writers only as have complied with all these requirements will receive consideration.

All the necessary particulars being here clearly set forth, it will be useless for many one to send further information or personal favors by addressing the editor as such letters cannot be answered.

1. *Only persons who are regular yearly subscribers to "Comfort" and who send with every manuscript at least two new yearly subscribers (together with 25 cents for each subscriber so sent) may compete for the prizes.*

2. *All contributions must have the number of words they contain plainly noted thereon in addition to the writer's full name and address with name do please it do, stories must be written on one side of the paper only, addressed to* EDITOR NUTSHELL STORY CLUB *care of* COMFORT, AUGUSTA, MAINE.

3. *All stories must be strictly original with the contributors who may write upon any subject, whether based upon fact, fancy or fiction—of adventure, love, war, peace; or city or country life, or of experiences on land or sea—but no story must contain more than 2,000 or less than 1,000 words.*

4. NO MANUSCRIPT WILL BE RETURNED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES AND COMPETITORS SHOULD THEREFORE RETAIN A COPY OF WHAT THEY SEND.

5. *The writer of the best original story will receive $50 cash; of the second best, $25 cash; of the third best, $20 cash; of the fourth best, $15 cash; and of the fifth best, $10 cash. Remittances will be sent by check as soon as awards have been made.*

No premiums will be given for subscriptions sent in under this Short Story Prize Offer.

The Publishers of "Comfort" reserve the right to purchase at their established rates any stories submitted under the foregoing offer, which failed to secure a prize.

PRIZE WINNERS FOR JANUARY.

Evelyn Foster, First Prize.
Wm. A. Lewis, Second Prize.
Dorothy Lundt, Third Prize.
Mrs. E. T. Mudge, Fourth Prize.
Minnie Thomas Boyce, Fifth Prize.

NOTE.—With reference to the prize story deception of which we spoke last month, we have sent the ten dollars offered in the case of Miss Goodyear's story "Sold for a Silk Rag," to George M. Grafton, of Morgan, S. C., and in the case of "What the Camera Did," by Miss Topham, to Miss Lillie Adams of Wheeler, Mich., these being the *first* to furnish us proof that we had been imposed upon. Our offer only referred to prize stories, but if the correspondent who wrote us in regard to Mrs. Watts' story, "The Yellow Kitten," will send to our Boston office full address, we will take pleasure in awarding a special cash prize.

THE GHOSTLY RIVAL.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY EVELYN FOSTER.

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EVER since I first learned them, I have wanted to relate the events just as they occurred. Val would not let me before; she had a nervous dread of their being connected with her life, and I don't blame her. Last night, however, she told me to use my own judgment; and I venture to believe, that, by veiling my characters with assumed names, and by a skillful manipu-

This evening, not an hour ago, we were dreamily chatting in the firelight, Val and I. We touched on many matters, lingering over none. At last, in the natural course of our talk, we came to the reason for my present visit here. For now, during her husband's brief trip to New York, I am Val's guest in their dear old home, "Mere Manse," on the Massachusetts coast. Douglas Tyler, himself, brought me here, and begged me not to leave Valerie until his return, even for a day. Not that she is afraid to be alone. Val is no coward; far from it, but—wait, you shall understand.

It began two years ago, before Douglas Tyler and Valerie West were man and wife.

His first wife, a handsome Spaniard, several years his senior, had died two years before. It was the evening, at Valerie's home in Boston, when Douglas told her of his love. Of course she had seen and welcomed it before, but not until this evening had the sweet silence between them broken into sweeter speech. He lingered late in his new found Eden. At last, the final "good night" had been whispered; and he left her, standing fair and gracious, in the little inner room, the library. Gazing with rapt eyes into the rosy face of their future, in the shaded light of the lamp, she stood. His hand was on the door of the outer room, the smile yet on his lips. How still the night was! only a soft, chance footfall overhead.

"Douglas!"

Did she call? or did the soft wind sigh his name through that great room?

"Valerie," the name dropped gently from his lips; he turned to look at her through the parted draperies of the inner room. She still stood as he had left her; no, she had not spoken, that was clear; and yet—

"Douglas!" louder this time, and unmistakable with its foreign tone.

Douglas Tyler is a sturdy fellow, square shouldered, square jawed, and square brained. His nerves are like fine steel, yet at this sound they quivered and his face grew white.

"Valerie!" he stood beside her now and she had grasped his arm. They were looking into each other's eyes.

"Yes, I heard," she breathed. A voice, a foreign voice had come between them from the grave. Valerie understood.

Later, in his own room, Douglas Tyler was sitting before a smoldering fire. A little packet of feminine letters lay on his knee, and he held an ivory type. Out from its frame of blood red jewels looked a dark, imperious face. The true type of southern beauty, full Andalusian, she was; black eyed, black haired, and heavy lidded, with a flush of carmine in the lips and cheeks. This man looked calmly into the brilliant, painted eyes.

"Have you kept your word, Carlotta? have you indeed come back?"

Only the low sigh of the night wind answered him.

"If so, it is well. I wish you to know, to understand. I never deceived you, would not now. You know I did not love you, but I paid my debt; I was faithful to the end. The bonds of the law are snapped by death—thank God!" He threw back his head and breathed a long sigh of relief. "Only the ties of the heart outlive the flesh; if death had not freed us from bondage I should surely have done so myself. It was a living lie!" He rose and, with firm step, paced the floor.

Blinded by a boy's infatuation, he had married the brilliant Spanish widow. What their life had been his nearest friend never knew; ed his steps

querades as love; while he endured faithfully, silently, patiently unto the last. Even to himself he did not complain; he had rashly sown the wind; the whirlwind he would bravely reap. At the last, when a quick, fierce fever was burning her vehement life away, she tried to bind him by oath to remain single for her sake. But Douglas Tyler had learned his lesson; he had done, forever, with false vows. In the solemn presence of death he gently refused to perjure himself, and swore to be faithful to truth alone.

With these words on her lips "Beware! I do not die. I will come—again!" she died.

Two years later, at midnight, he stood in his room holding her letters, and looking, for the last time, on her pictured face. Quietly, he took the likeness from its frame and laid it, with the letters, on the dying coals. The lazy tongues of flame curled slowly around their food as a low moan clearly echoed through the room. Douglas Tyler raised his head, and looked steadfastly about him. "Is the veil so thin," he mused, "that falls before the face of death?"

The next was two months later, during our glorious cruise along the Massachusetts' coast.

It was on the evening of our third on board, and we were having our first taste of storm. A fine taste it was, too!

The "Kelpie," Douglas Tyler's new steam yacht, was bravely grappling with her foes, the elements; most of our party had discreetly retired; only Douglas, Val, and I were astir in the little cabin.

I had been given grace to bury myself in a book in a far corner; while Val and her Douglas, at the other end of the cabin, looked out together into the wild night.

There was that evening an almost superhuman sympathy—Val said so afterwards—between the two; they had talked, felt, thought, almost like one being. She had just consented to their marriage in the coming month; he folded his arms about her, bent his head, and—fairly choking with horror, I sprang to my feet! Never, till I cease to hear, shall I forget that sound; that long, awful howl of rage and anguish that swept through the boat.

"Douglas! Douglas! Douglas!" wailed that unearthly voice with the curious foreign flavor in the tones.

Outside the storm fiend tore with furious fingers at our boat, rattled fiercely at the window panes, and hurled its white fire in our eyes. But through the crash of thunder, over the whistle of wind, from end to end of the boat, pierced that ghastly cry from unseen lips.

In wild alarm, rushed both men and women from their rooms.

"Valerie!" called Mrs. West. "Val, my child, is it you? *What* is it? Who is it?" She grasped her daughter and Douglas for support, while her voice sank to a horrified whisper, seeing them so white and still.

"Lost! lost! lost! Oh!" the wail rose almost to a shriek.

Just then a smothered scream came from another point. Leaving the almost senseless mother to Valerie and myself, Douglas rushed to his sisters' room. They were both hysterical from fright.

"Douglas Tyler," gasped Clare, "that voice, *her* voice! Did you hear? *Did you hear?*" She shook him wildly by the arm. He took her feverish hands in his.

"Clare, be still! hear me, there is nothing to fear. I will—"

"Listen!" Elsa, the younger, shivered as she spoke. A volley of sharp raps played a quick

'those raps, they will not stop." her teeth chattered as the raps increased

Just here that most ungodly wailing recommenced.

"Douglas! Douglas! Douglas!" up and down the cabin in wild moans until the mad wind seemed to pick it up and bear it shrieking through the world.

The horror of it was that nothing could be seen; search as we would, not even a shadow could be found; and that bloodless voice wailed on.

That was a hideous night! Of course we could not leave that boat, there was no escape. No one slept; no one left the cabin; there we huddled all the long hours through, wondering, doubting, fearing, till the dawn broke, faint and gray. They had begged, both Val and Douglas, that none of us should speak of this outside. So, for their sakes, we kept it as quiet as we could; but some, if not all, of us wondered at Val's courage, when next month she kept her word and married that voice-haunted man. And now, for the first time in the two years of their happy married life, he is forced to leave her for a little time; I am with Valerie, or I was an hour or more ago.

How lovely she did look to-night! I see her now as she leaned among the pillows in her husband's great arm chair—the mellow lustre of her creamy silken robe; the soft lamb's wool around her full, white throat; the open sleeves falling away from her dimpled arms.

I lounged near her on the soft divan, while the firelight from the big pine knots danced fitfully around us both.

I asked her about that voice. Had she, had they, heard nothing of it since that time?

"No! Douglas, no; but I—well, yes, and no, but never the same as on the boat that night; oh, no!" She shivered a little, and held her small hands toward the blaze.

"One night I waked, I don't know why, and saw—I know I saw it, dear!" she smiled at me; "I saw my rocking chair—you know the big bent rocker in my room?—move slowly back and forth. It stood just in the moonlight, in plain sight. I saw it rocking to and fro—oh! it seemed a long, long time."

"Rocking *alone?*"

"Alone, so far as I could see. Another time, about three weeks ago, I waked and saw the same chair rock again. This time, though, I saw something more; a form, a shadowy form, of her; you know, his former wife. I sometimes saw her when she was alive. She looked the same but vaporous and pale; all but her eyes, they gleamed like fire. She looked at me —*no through* me—for a while, then smiled. That smile! I'd rather hear a hundred her shriek than see that smile. Bye and bye she left, the chair and glided to the bed. She bent low over me and hissed into my ear, into my brain, these words: 'You have him now, poor fool. Keep him while you can; for *here* he's mine, *mine.* Do you hear? I'll have him forever more!' She seemed to laugh in ghastly, mocking mirth and melt away."

I had written thus far last night, when there came a quick rap on my door. I rose trembling and opened it. It was only Ellen, Val's maid.

"Oh, ma'am, Mrs. Tyler's very ill; she begs you'll come to her room, and—" but I was in Val's room. In half an hour the doctor had been summoned, and a despatch sent to New York. Oh, that weary night! My poor, brave Val! Her suffering seemed mainly mental, she was battling with grim terrors which we could

hard. She's here, right close beside us, there!" She pointed, and I shrank from where her gaze was fixed. "She's trying to get me from him; but she can't, she can't! You'll see, I'll win!"

She did, thank Heaven, she did.

At noon to-day her husband came; and, after that, we knew that she was safe. This afternoon at two Valerie's boy was born, and now here's heavenly peace through all the house.

And she, that sad, malignant phantom of the past? In the presence of such love and trust as theirs, what can such poor spite do? Love conquers all. Even hate and woe must one day bow before its heavenly spell. I think Carlotta's power is spent, and she will trouble Douglas and Valerie nevermore.

THE GREAT SURGEON.

A CHRISTMAS TALE.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY WILLIAM ALBERT LEWIS.

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IF you have ever *happened*—for nothing but accident would ever take you there—to pass through the Rue Restore, in Marseilles, you know how dismal, bleak, and desolate a thing it is. It is the last place you would ever look for a physician, or a surgeon. Still in 1891 there lived, in a story-and-a-half house in this same Rue Restore, a short, slim, pale young man, and upon the door frame was a plaintive sign with the words:

"Poscalier, M. D."

M. Poscalier took possession of this three-room abode early in July. When he moved in which he did between dark and dawn, that time he was assisted by a sweet-faced young lady having the brightest golden hair one ever beheld. The few home-keeping utensils were brought upon a hand dray; in the shafts of which the new tenant—the M. D. himself—wearily tugged; not that the load was heavy, but because the motive power was weak. Behind, pushing as much as she was able, followed this young woman.

When they halted before No. 21, the doctor was forced to sit on the door rock to recover breath. The young lady, by no means "blown" through the exertion, pulled off her gloves, unfastened the rope which bound the load, took the big key from the doctor's thin hand, unfastened the door, and had the hand cart unloaded before the man was able to rise.

This ungualant willingness to accept assistance did not result from the man's indolence. It lay in his helpless weakness.

"There, Luke," exclaimed the now ruddy-faced girl. "Let's go in."

And she placed her arm about the emaciated form and assisted the doctor to rise.

"Why, Louise!" was the vainly attempted exclamation. "You have me all settled a-ready! Oh, but I am poorly!"

"Yes, indeed you are, Luke; and I know you will be no better living in this dreadful place; abandon it, dear! Give it up! It isn't worth the attempt! It is going to kill you, Luke, and then I'll reproach myself for consenting to our coming here! Do, Luke! Come, let's pick it up, and come back home with me!"

The yellow-faced skeleton of manhood sank into a chair and gazed into the bright blue eyes bending over him. He tried several times to speak, but failed; and he ended by a hat slow sign of resolution which dispenses with words.

"Send my books down to-morrow, Louise," he gasped at last.

A large quantity of books was brought by a tired drayman the next day. He piled them in the middle of the floor.

The young doctor was lying helpless on his bed.

* * * * * * *

Hard-headed M. Kepplon had absolutely refused to permit his daughter—the heiress to is three immense silk mills—to receive the addresses of poor, sickly Luke Poscalier, the lately graduated doctor of medicine. Improunnings were futile. The rich mill owner was influrate. M. Poscalier must cease to visit lile. Keppion.

"My discovery is before the Academy, Louise," xplained the doctor. "I know it has merit. erhaps I may be rewarded. If I win, my practice will instantly spring into fabulous excence and product. My name will be upon very lip. You will be proud of me, then! Then e will be married!"

And Louise—not waiting to be asked if she ould wait—for him—placed her fair, full arms bout that wasted neck of the frail discoverer f fearful, delicate surgery which would revolutionize a certain branch of the science, and aid:

"Yes, Luke. And Louise will take such good are of her Great Surgeon. Won't she, Luke dear?"

* * * * * * *

The National Academy had postponed from week to week, for several months, the denouement of Dr. Poscalier's discovery—a claim of triumph in a certain branch of intricate urgery. Members from remote quarters ere gained in the city, patiently awaiting the reovery of Dr. Poscalier from his "temporary indisposition." They were eager—the learned wind would be, if successful, the greatest discovery of the century in surgery. Even April and May ollowed November and December, until November word came weekly from the unknown discoverer that he would be able to appear before the Academy to demonstrate his system.

Repeatedly the obscurity of the name of Poscalier tempted the trustees to decline further rifling with a seemingly hopeless invalid; but hey were retained through the clamorous ir inciples involved, and the inculcable gain he profession would derive should anything come of the matter.

At length, after many postponemens, Dr. Poscalier informed the Academy he would positively appear before them on the afternoon of December 24th and expound his system of practice. The hall was packed with delegates from all over the world; when, at precisely three o'clock, the side door opened, and a slender, stooping, tottering staff of humanity made his way to the front, bowing his acknowledgments of the applause which greeted him. In the garb of his loose coat he wore a violet that Louise had pinned there when she assisted him into a cab in front of No. 21 Rue Restore.

The assemblage marvelled at the extreme youth of the new interesting discoverer; and he held the rapt attention of the thousand members as step by step he unfolded a principle of scientific and heretofore dubious practice to the amazed and enthusiastic intelligence of the Academicians. Little by little the emaciated form seemed to acquire rotundity. Moment by moment the achy pallor disappeared to the temperings of eager interest, until the cheeks blazed with the ardor of conscious success. At length came the experimental demonstration. Members struggled with each other in offering to assist the stripling, who approached the operating table with a step of invincible power. When the unconscious subject lay stretched before him, Dr. Poscalier seized his scalpel with the delicacy of inspiration, while above and around him were grouped the most eminent surgeons of the universe. For fully an hour he swept the keen blades through the flesh of the oblivious being, dilating upon his principle and its result. Finally when the incontestible accuracy of his methods were established, he wielded the fusion of approbation met the triumphant discoverer.

They cheered him!

They elected him a member of the body!

They voted him a pension!

The ordeal concluded, Nature, which for the few critical hours had kindly favored the cause of ambition with her aid, once more resumed the disciplinarian; and the man whose name was vibrating over the telegraph lines of the world, tottered down the steps of the Academy and sank into his cab.

* * * * * * *

Christmas morning dawned clear and cold. Immediately after breakfast, during which the family loudly commended the now world-famed Dr. Poscalier, the surprised triumph was recited in the morning press! Louise, flushed with joy at the words of her father, who wrote her into the Poscalier to dine with his family, hastened to the Rue Restore. She rapped at No. 21 and, receiving no reply she pushed open the door.

Upon the bed, still clad in his simple suit of black, about his neck the ribbon and decoration of the Academy, in his hand the roll of parchment constituting him a member of the august body, lay the Great Surgeon. On his face, a smile. Beneath his cheek, Louise's violet.

Dr. Poscalier was famous, successful, and—DEAD.

HITCHED TO A HORSE.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY DOROTHY LUNDT.

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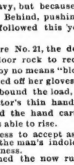

"HUGGINS!" roared the station superintendent, with his head out of the window of his little lighted office, and apparently hailing the name in a rain-threshed, windblown darkness.

"Yessir!" came, respond in a shrill, prompt, hoarse growl. A burly figure, in dripping oilskins, came from the outer darkness into the open window's circle of light.

"Have we an engine not in use?"

"Yessir. 1219's on the siding, sir."

"Well, she's got to come off the siding. Read this."

Huggins took the telegram from his superior's hand, and read it, giving a dismayed grunt as he did so. "Freight car 1010 broken down from train, somewhere between here and Craghill Junction," it said. "Send out engine at once and bring her in."

"Yessir," handing the telegram back. "Nice road, 'twixt here and Craghill, what isn't up grade's down grade. Nice night!" as the wind slammed the window shutter, to the imminent peril of the superintendent's head. "Nice job altogether. Just get out the engine, and I'll press due at nine. There'd be the devil to pay with a wild car on the track, and the fog and forest fire smoke shuttin' off everythin' further'n a foot ahead."

"Who'll take out the engine?"

"I can't, with this here game hand," holding up a bandaged member. "Reckon Jack Harkins'll do. He's in vacation, but he'd rather run an engine's go than anything else. Fire for him."

Half an hour later Jack Harkins, keen-eyed, crisp-curled, stalwart, also in dripping oilskins, and his cap with the railroad's final charges, from the cab window of No. 1219.

"Good go too, Jack! You've got the night before you. And don't forget to set the those abandoned switches, on the left of the road. They caused the wreck more many times when they built this piece, there's about as far as I remember, straight, too. Like as not 1010 has blown down one of 'em. It's blowing enough to run off a town, let alone a freight-car."

"Yes sir! That's all?"

"That's all! Pull out ahead." And engine 1219 pulled out into the wild October night.

There was excitement at the grocery shop at Creekin Four Corners. Tommy Pinkham had just told the news. He had, according to his own statement, brought in the milkin' a little earlier than common, the night bein' so bad; and he discovered the kitchen and the sitting-room being wide open, Deacon Jones' words had come to him plain as if he was sittin' ercin' em in his—Tommy's—ear.

"An' Hetty White, she was a-cryin' fit to make you better, too, jest to hear her!" Thus Tommy, to the open-mouthed listeners his tale had filled from molasses barrel and cracker-box. "An' says she, 'The good Lord knows,' says she, 'Deacon Jones, I'm a poor, sick woman, an' I'm a-leanin' a-roof to our heads, to live in this old frightfulness, and put up our few poor belongin's there, and made a home for you, good Lord knows,' says she, 'I didn't s'pose you had old freight-cars, and I'd be to anybody after the railroad condemned it.'"

"No more I'm sayin' of the indignant chorus.

"Wal but I'm frail it does!" thus the shopkeeper, meditatively scratching his head. "I jest happened to be round—sho! Didn't I never tell ye—Th' day that old car was condemned. An' says Deacon Jones to the railroad man, 'What'll ye sell her for?' says he. An' the railroad man looked at her—one side partly stayed seventy-five cents, I s'pose, he, grinnin'. An' the Deacon plunked down and took a bill of sale."

"The old skinflint! What for?"

"Said there was wood enough in it to build two pig-sties."

"Why didn't he build 'em?"

"Cos 'twas next week poor Mis' White died, an' the children was turned off the farm. Hetty White—plucky's she is pretty, by thunder!—took the children an' the cook-stove, and camped out in the old freight-car, never s'posin', as she said, it b'longed to anybody."

"Well what's struck Deacon Jones to make her trouble now if he didn't then?"

"Lemme tell!" thus, shrilly, Tommy Pinkham, bitterly aggrieved at public attention thus snatched from himself. "Well, I'd—Deacon Jones,' says Hetty, 'you'd never turn me an' my little babes out o' the car, this dreadful night, an' us with never a roof to turn to.' 'But you have a roof,' says he, 'an' if you're too proud to come under it's no fault of mine.'"

"Lawful fiddlesticks!"

"He's was a Bluebeard!"

"An' his fourth wife with hardly time to get comf'tably asleep in her coffin!"

"An' Hetty White young enough to be his grand-darter!"

"An' he says"—Tommy's voice shrill again, above the indignant chorus—"an' he says, 'one roof will I give you—a last thinkin' on it over; an' then I'll come down to that car, an' my hired man with me; an' either you come with me to the minister's or out o' that car you go, neck an'—e!'"

"Oh dose she!"

"Well this is a leetle too much!"

"I reckon Deacon Jones here'll go to that car 'fore the Deacon does, an' when it comes to turnin' out, we'll see!"

"I'm a goin' too! I'm a goin' too!"

"But, Daddy, your rheumatis!"

"Don't burn my rheumatis! Ef thet ol' skunk's agoin' to get his come-uppance, I'll be there to see! He killers wut the Jonah in this town's ointment."

"I guess I was the fly in the ointment, Daddy. Jonah wuz in—"

"Cose he wuz! Cose he wuz! Jonah wuz in the sass's belly! Ain't ye ever hearin' Peter you ever saw daylight!"

They all were going. In pea-jackets and weather-worn tarpaulins, with here an ox-goad and there a hoe-handle as possible weapons of offence. "It's a good cause! Ef ye ain't yourselves, gentlemen! Help yourselves!" said the milliant shop-keeper—they made a strange procession the lashing rain and buffeting wind, down the bit of road that lay between the village and the rusting, grass-grown bit of deserted track where the old car lay.

The Deacon's lone, a single candle glimmered mistily through the one, tiny, barred window. The large door at his side, hospitably open, was now close-barred against the storm. Through the wind, they caught a child's frightened cry, and the sound of a girl's sobbing.

"Ketch holt o' your sticks, boys! There's the Deacon's lantern in front of the road. Hear him hollerin' for her to open the door? Hear—Lord A'mighty! What's that?"

"THAT" was a vast, shapeless bulk, that suddenly rushed upon them from the stormy dark; a black bulk, vomiting flame, and with a yell that tore their ears. It dashed past; then back down to the road, to the village and home. There was a hoarse shout or two; a sound of clanking iron; another yell; more bursts of fire; and before the Deacon on one side of the track or the deliverers on the other had passed in their horror-stricken flight, the fiery monster was gone, and the old freight-car was gone with it.

They said afterward the Deacon ran to Sparkunk centre without stopping.

As for the rescue party, they sat down in a puddle that they mistook for a fallen log, and discussed the situation.

"Speakin' o' Scripture, e' that wasn't the fiery, fiery chariot—"

"Tech an' away the bears thet eat the bald-heads!"

"Didn't look much Heaven-sent!"

"Thet's so. More like t'other place. Don't ye s'pose thetsun's made a mistake, an' thought he'd got the Deacon in that car?"

"Well, devil or lugine—an' I reckon it wor an indigine, with wy sent—thet ol' sidin', Providence only knows!—I guess it's took thirty out of the Deacon's mighty rheumatis!"

It had. When Huggins and Harkins, catching sight of the light in the car they had been strenuously picked up, and stopping to investigate, had found instead of piled-up merchandise, a fire-lighted up home-place, two frightened children, and a girl with eyes as brown as oak leaves in the autumn sun, there was wonder and amazement. Hearing her story, they said things, at least Huggins said things, and Harkins looked at Hetty. He has looked at Hetty several times since. In fact he looked at Hetty so intently that Engine 1219 releases him to home and wife. He says it was the prettiest home, home, home, unintentionally, as it were, when he is out chasing a wild freight-car.

THE LAWYER'S SECRET.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY MRS. E. T. MUDGE.

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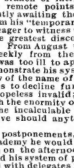

TWAS in the spring of 1824 that I entered the law office of my uncle, Frank Clemens, to study, and at the same time to make myself useful in the duties pertaining to that business, particularly that portion which required traveling through the neighboring towns and villages, looking up titles, serving notices, etc.

On my return from one of these trips, I noticed that my uncle's clerk, a middle aged man, who had served him for a number of years, seemed to be gazing at me in rather a peculiar manner, so though he should be absent, and as a little doubtful as to how I would receive his advancer. For with the conceit of youth I imagined myself fully the peer of my uncle in the knowledge of law, and vastly his superior in appearance, and manner of approaching a client. Mr. Allen had undoubtedly discovered this failing of mine, and hesitated to place himself in a position to be snubbed by a man of half his years and experience.

Finally one morning, my uncle being absent, he braced himself up and addressed me, thus: "Alfred, I have a little matter that I wish to speak to you about, but hardly know whether it is right to do so. I am in your uncle's employ, and have served him faithfully for many years, but of his past life I know nothing. We all know what a silent reserved man

(NUTSHELL STORIES CONTINUED ON PAGE 3.)

"German Syrup."

I must say a word as to the efficacy of German Syrup. I have used it in my family for Bronchitis, the result of Colds, with most excellent success. I have taken it myself for Throat Troubles, and have derived good results therefrom. I therefore recommend it to my neighbors as an excellent remedy in such cases. James T. Durette, Earlysville, Va. Beware of dealers who offer you "something just as good." Always insist on having Boschee's German Syrup. ®

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Silk & satin remnants from class manufacturers in Broadway silk rock wool makers, leading Fifth Avenue dress makers, silk manufacturers, etc. etc. By prolong this notice we get a brilliant assortment for patchwork. Each package contains a fine lot of assorted pieces, all different colors. Ladies find profit and pleasure in making these silk remnants into quilts, pillows, etc. Sent free for 10 cents. Two for 15 cents. NEW STAMPING OUTFIT—Outfit consists of 1 Stamping Pattern, 1 Powder Box, Assortment of Stamps and 1 Pincushion. Price 25 cents. Sent free for 25 cents. Two for 40 cents. Two outfits and one pincushion for 50 cents. Two outfits and one pincushion for 75 cents. Two outfits and one pincushion for 100 cents. Two outfits and one pincushion for 125 cents. Two outfits and one pincushion for 150 cents. Two outfits and one pincushion for

THE NUTSHELL STORY CLUB.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.)

se is, one who seems to have had a past, a past that he does not care to have referred to. Since I have been associated so closely with you, I have grown interested in you, and unwilling to stand by and see your interests interfered with, even by my employer, and your uncle."

You may imagine that my curiosity was fully aroused, and taking Mr Allen by the hand I thanked him for his good opinion of me, and assured him, that whatever he might say, would be taken in good part, and my uncle should be none the wiser.

Thus assured he continued: "Whenever you are away, a man comes to this office, inquiring for your uncle, then asks, if the young man is in. If I answer in the negative, he enters, I am dismissed, and he and your uncle remain closeted together for some time. Last week when you returned unexpectedly from your trip, he came, asked his usual questions, and when I replied that you had returned that morning, he departed hastily, saying his business was not important and he would call again. That is all, very little you may think, but it worries me. Why does he come to see you? What is the relationship of your uncle? Is it for evil or for good? I decided to ponder over it no longer, but to discuss the fact to you, and get you act as you choose about it. I hope I have not offended you, and that you will not think hard of me or imagining that your uncle may intend doing you wrong."

I assured him to the contrary, and again thanking him for his interest, returned to my desk, but my thoughts were not on my work. At length, jumping up, I took my hat, and saying to Mr. Allen that I would return in about an hour, I walked towards the suburbs of the city, to plan my course in the matter. For I could not let things remain as they seemed to be here. My mind was unsettled, and I could not give the attention to my business which it deserved while rooting over this mystery. I resolved to go to my uncle, and ask for an explanation.

Having come to this conclusion, I retraced my steps, and was about to enter the office, when the door opened and my father appeared. My father! whom I supposed sixty miles away, and he had come on his left, and who, to my knowledge had not been in — for twenty years.

Of course I expressed great surprise at meeting him, overwhelmed him with questions as to his business in the city, his plans for the day, etc. He told me he was anxious to see my uncle, and would go to his residence, as he must leave for home that evening.

"Wait a moment," said I, "I will speak to Mr. Allen and accompany you."

I rushed up the steps and was about to tell Mr. Allen that I would not be back until the next day, then he said hastily, "Did you know anyone at your time in?"

I said, "Yes, I just met my father, and came to say that I should spend the rest of the day with him."

"Your father! How strange! I wish you to meet him avoids you. The man I told you of, who is constantly with your uncle in your absence."

This was indeed a surprise, but I no longer felt any doubt of his mystery. If my father and uncle met, I knew it meant no evil towards me. So it was with a much lighter heart that I rejoined my father, and taking his arm, said: "And now tell me what brings you to the city, and why you did not advise of your coming?"

"I would have done so gladly my boy, but as you died to see your uncle first, then if he does not object, you shall be told the mystery of your life, for it no longer affrightens me, and I suppose you think it a mystery, and that my visit to the city is connected with it."

Unconsciously I hastened my steps and a walk of a minutes brought us to my uncle's residence, a substantial looking mansion in a fashionable quarter of the city. Running lightly up the steps I ushered my father into the library, and turned to ask my uncle, when he could conveniently see him, saying, "Henry, are you here, and with Alfred? Are you told him?"

"No, Frank, I promised you to tell him nothing without your consent. You have asked me to allow you to right the wrong you have done him, and to let him with your own lips tell the story of your life, leaving me to day to make one more appeal, my last, and not that I shall not be disappointed."

My uncle sat silent a few moments, gazing before him in an abstracted manner. Finally, he said, "I will tell, Henry, you shall have your wish, my only son for this long delay has been solely on your account, for my gain will be your loss."

"Now, Alfred, for the story."

"I married when very young, a girl who had been lured in affluence and knew nothing of a life of comparative poverty. Her parents objecting to the match, we eloped, and, taking my brother Henry to our confidence, we left the country that we could live with him until I should be able to establish a home of my own. As I was the eldest and heir, he was glad of our companionship, and we were mutually pleased with the arrangement.

"For about five years we struggled along together, gained very little, for a young lawyer, without money or influence, finds it uphill work to make a living. My wife, always delicate, sank into a decline, and died leaving a little boy three years old. was completely disheartened, and leaving my child with my brother on the farm, I sailed for Australia, determined to gain a fortune or never to return.

"After some years of hard work, I was successful, and, with a comparatively large fortune, returned to my home, to find my brother married, and my child so engrossed in his affections, that he scarcely recognized me. Of course I could be ungrateful after all his kindness, but I felt a little out of place, so, extracting a promise from him that he would better my secret, I left the boy and my old home upon him as his father. I betook myself to the city, established the firm, and for years I am the hard irriving member, and lived a lonely isolated life.

"When my boy was old enough, I thought it wise to face him with the mat I might learn to know and see him, and then to tell him the truth about his ancestage. I took him willingly, but still hesitated best tell him his history and depriving my my father of the boy he had raised and loved as his own. But at his earnest desire I hesitate no longer and now, Alfred, you know the truth. The man you are always looked upon as your father, is in reality, our uncle, while I am your father. I am a rich man, if I have will be yours; but while we live, Henry must be our first thought, for to him we both owe everything."

Bob's Night at the Station.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY MINNIE THOMAS BOYCE.

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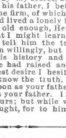
LITTLE Mrs. Lewis was angry; dreadfully angry.

Not that it was such a rare thing for little Mrs. Lewis to be angry. She was angry often and often. But to do, little Mrs. Lewis justice she never got angry at her tiny six weeks old baby and seldom, very seldom, at her gay young husband of a year and a half standing.

Now, however, a he was really and truly angry at the latter and all on account of a lie. A very simple little lie Bob had thought when he told it, but little Mrs. Lewis found it



Bit she called it a "foul, wicked, cruel lie."

And this is how it all came about.

Bob was superintendent of the electric light plant in B——, and very frequently had to be away at night to straighten out "crossed wires," and "short circuits," and "dynamos," and "brushes," and any amount of things that little Mrs. Lewis knew nothing at all about; but it was all right, "Bob knew" and "no one else but Bob could fix them," she would say proudly, when certain suspicious friends would ask why she had to be left alone so much at night.

Now Bob was not really a bad fellow, not an out and out bad fellow I mean. He was often extravagant and *would* forget to come to his meals on time; but little Mrs. Lewis did not mind that for she knew it was only "Bob's way."

Bob was a great tall good-looking fellow, of six or eight and twenty. He worshiped his small blackeyed little wife and adored his baby, but despite all that he did enjoy getting out with the boys occasionally and having what they called "a time," and that's how the lie happened to be told.

It was late in the evening, for a cooking apparatus to be run by electricity. He had received it that day and had at once taken it over to the station to be tested. It worked like a charm. Bob declared he had never enjoyed a meal so much. Then they drifted up to have a supper in the back room that night and invite half a dozen of the boys to join them.

Bob went home that evening somewhat earlier than usual and his little wife was congratulating herself upon having a nice easy evening.

"Why, how early you are, Bob," she said, giving him a kiss and holding baby up for him.

"Oh, I can't stay, Nellie," Bob replied, without a blush, pretending to be busy with his overcoat; "McFadden's wife is sick and I'll have to stay at the station in his place to-night."

Nellie was ready to cry with disappointment and Bob had half a mind to tell her the truth in his uneasiness; but he knew, from a year and a half's experience, that such a course would be the direst folly and no good time with the boys.

So anxiety was soon forgotten and Bob was off.

Next afternoon Nellie took baby and went around to see how Mrs. McFadden's sick woman was. Where was her surprise to find that worthy woman busy over the washtub.

"Why, Mrs. McFadden I thought you were sick," she exclaimed.

"Sick is it?" said Mrs. McFadden looking down at her strong red arms admiringly. "Indade mum I'm far from sick."

"Why, weren't you sick last night?" asked Nellie cautiously fearing she was being deceived.

"No mum," returned good Mrs. McFadden with a broad grin, "I had been up to Bob's wake. Who been tellin' ye that lie now?"

Nellie made no reply. She smothered her confusion and said bravely, "Oh, I heard you wasn't well. I forgot yesterday to ask Bob how you were. Good-bye Mrs. McFadden," she concluded anxious to get away.

"Good day to ye mum," said that worthy lady during her visit she had not sat down once.

Nellie was not only angry but miserable. Bob had deceived her. Perhaps he had deceived her dozens of times before. *Of course* he had deceived her before, and she had been foolish not to believe everything he had told her. In all probability that was a lie last week when he told her that he was going to see his mother little Mrs. Lewis thought about it the more convinced she became that Bob was a villain of the deepest dye. Perhaps he was deceiving her all along, and that she was the most abused little woman in the world.

"He ought to be punished," she thought. "I'll just get the baby ready and go down to the station to see Aunt Jane's, and not leave one word about where I have gone, and when he comes home to-night I'll have himself."

So the nab called for her at 4 P. M. and she took the train for Aunt Jane's.

That good woman was very glad to see both her and the baby, but Nellie resolved to say nothing to her about Bob's conduct.

The first day passed pleasantly enough, though sometimes Nellie was inclined to fear Bob does not do his duty by you is that any excuse for your not doing yours by him?" and "No good will come of it, no good will come of it."

The night was a restless one for the little woman. She made up her mind to go home next morning twenty times, I suppose, and changed it just as many times.

The lie did not look half as bad as it did at first. She began to think it was a little mean of him to be the first one he had ever told her. Then too, how kind he had been to her and how proud of her! Yes, Bob she wouldn't go back; that's all there was about it.

Next day was a long one, and she had imagined all sorts of things.

A sick man, strange eyes saw something amiss, but she wisely refrained from asking any questions.

About evening a little boy came to the passenger boy brought the following telegram: "Bob hurt, come at once. Bob hurt."

But Nellie lay in a dead faint before she read the whole of it. Aunt Jane was alarmed, but soon and she came to herself, all little Mrs. Lewis could say was, "Home, home, home, to Bob, to Bob."

The lie was entirely forgotten. Only Bob's great grey eyes looking at her with kindly reproving, as they had looked so often, were all she could see. How many times she had been impatient and fretful, "Naggin' Bob" as he called it, and how good humoredly he had born it. Yes, Bob had been an angel and she had been not half the good she deserved to be to him.

What did it matter if he had lied, if he could only be spared her she would never say a word if he staid away from home a little, if he lied.

The train back to B—— was due at 5 o'clock, and never before, Nellie thought, did it crawl as fast as on short a time.

It seemed hours and hours before the conductor called out B——. Then she took baby and fairly flew off the steps into the arms of a young stranger, for one of them was in a sling and the poor fellow was looking dreadfully pale.

"Oh, Bob, darling, I thought you were dead," she sobbed, throwing her arms around his neck regardless of lookers on, and asking no Bob fully half in her excitement.

She was crying softly against the lapel of Bob's gray coat. Bob looked a little bit embarrassed as any ordinary young fellow in a crowd would have looked. But he bore it manfully. Then he had to tell Nellie on the way home all about how he fell from the ladder and how the boys were frightened and carried her home.

"But how did you know where I was?" Nellie interrupted, insistently; as if he had kept her running to look for her at Aunt Jane's the first place.

"Oh, I found out," said Bob, smiling down at her, "and was on my way to bring you home when something got the matter with the line and I was obliged to attend to it before train time."

"Oh, you dear old thing," said Nell, giving his arm a gentle squeeze—his good arm—"I've been so wretched."

"And I've been such a brute," said big Bob, taking her in his arms the minute they got inside the door.

Then Nellie chirped up and said she kept running his hair this way and that over her finger, and Bob sat up and bore himself like a martyr, of course, till Bridget rang the bell for supper.

And that's how it all ended.

HAPPENINGS.

Prairie fires near Winnipeg have recently destroyed a great deal of property, burned considerable live stock and several people.

The only sub-marine gun in the world has just been completed for our government; the English navy will soon have another.

A steamer was foundered in Lake Erie during one of the recent severe storms and thirteen people, all her crew save three, were drowned.

Oklahoma wants to become a State. If she succeeds during the next year she will have made the shortest record of any territory, which would be less than four years.

A recent storm along the Pacific coast caused thousands of dollars loss to stockmen and farmers near Guadalajara, Mexico, swept away whole villages, and drowned over 150 persons.

During one of the international yacht-races in October, the Pall Mall Gazette in London, received news of the result just one minute and forty seconds after the winning boat "Vigilant" crossed the line.

The Pacific mail steamer City of New York went ashore near the Golden Gate, San Francisco, recently, and was wrecked, entailing a loss of $500,000. The passengers were saved, but first went through a panic.

The largest check ever drawn in Chicago, was made out by the Treasurer of the World's Fair on Chicago day, to settle its indebtedness, and was for $1,565,310.16. The attendance at the Fair on that day was over 700,000, the largest on record.

A young woman insisted in going up in a balloon near Chicago recently. The balloonist objected, but finally allowed her to go. When they were a mile up he noticed that she was fast asleep and drove the balloon into the lake nearly drowning the occupants.

A Baltimore woman died on the witness-stand a short time ago and wound up her statement by saying, "Just as sure as God sits for judgment in glory, what I have said is the truth." The sooner were the words uttered than she was struck dumb, tottered and fell.

A large amount of spurious coin has been in circulation this fall in Chicago, and a gang of men were recently arrested in Mexico for selling counterfeit United States money for the real article, but not until a considerable amount had been disposed of.

A Pennsylvania farmer who had hoarded up $18,000 and kept it in a bag in his house, was called out by two men one evening recently, and commanded to reveal its hiding-place. He refused and was knocked down; but after firing two bullets at his home keeper, the robbers fled. He keeps his money in a bank now.

One of the worst railroad accidents of the season occurred near Battle Creek, Michigan, in October, when one train crashed into another filled with World's Fair excursionists. Twenty-eight persons were either killed outright or roasted alive within half an hour of the accident. The bodies were burned beyond recognition.

The superstitions found a great deal to talk about in connection with one of the terrible wrecks on the Michigan Central recently. There were thirteen cars in the section. It was on Friday, the 13th day of the month, 13 years after the occurrence of a still more fatal accident in the same road, and almost at the same spot, and 13 persons were killed.

The assassination of Carter H. Harrison, Mayor of Chicago on October 28th, was one of the most dastardly acts of the present day. To gratify a personal spite, an office-seeker named Prendergast, went to the Mayor's residence and called for him. When he came out, Prendergast shot him down and fired three shots. In fifteen minutes Chicago's mayor was dead.

The World's Fair closed October 30th. The number of paid admissions amounted to over 28,000,000, the attendance for the last six months entire. The ticket of $30,558,849 was paid and about $1,000,000 remained in the treasury. This is one of the most dazzlingly acts of the present day. To gratify a personal spite, an office-seeker named Prendergast, went to the Mayor's residence and called for him. When he came out, Prendergast shot him down and fired three shots. In fifteen minutes Chicago's mayor was dead.

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Eleven highly respected women in a small Nebraska town, undertook recently to correct the morals of several young men in a novel way. They formed an "White Caps" they decoyed the girls into the woods and there proceeded to flog them unmercifully, and were about to cut off their hair when they were interrupted and stopped. The perpetrators of the outrage were found by the jailer, who were arrested for assault and battery and several, not obtaining bail, were put in jail.

The new battle-ship Oregon, is the most powerful vessel of the United States navy. Her dimensions are as follows: Length over all 348 feet; load waterline 350 feet; breadth 69 feet 3 inches; draught 24 feet; displacement, 10,288 tons; maximum horsepower, 9,000. She will have a maximum speed of 16 knots and will carry a crew of 460 men. The cost, exclusive of armament, will be $3,000,000. The armament will consist of four 13-inch, eight 8-inch and four 6-inch breechloading rifles; also a secondary battery of twenty-four 6-pounder and six 1-pounder rapid-fire guns two gatlings, and also six torpedo tubes—13-inch and 18-inch are mounted in turrets. The Oregon's armor is very heavy.

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DURING the year of 1894 a great many women will doubtless, as in the past, devote much time to the hand-mirror. Indeed there are numerous members of the fairer sex who think Cupid is invariably connected with the arrangement of their back hair, or the fit and "hang" of their gowns. It really seems as if some women cared more that their family and themselves be fashionably clad, than that they are well and healthily fed, or that their manners instead of their clothes shall proclaim them ladies and gentleman. I am sure, however, that COMFORT readers belong mostly to that sensible class who strike a happy medium between the extreme fashions and that general disregard for personal appearance that marks the "dowdy." To be well-dressed, says a famous writer—is to be inconspicuously dressed. One's clothes should be so well fitted and neat, and so closely allied to themselves, as to be unnoticeable. This may seem rather a cruel doctrine to the young girl who desires above all things to have her pretty clothes seen and admired; but it has long been an accepted creed that the most attractive woman in any gathering is the one whose clothes seem so much a part of herself, so truly a setting for her personal charms *instead* of eclipsing them, that after one has left her, *herself* and not her clothes will be remembered with pleasure. And this sensible, practical fashion is one in which sensible, practical COMFORT mothers, throughout the length and breadth of the land, are endeavoring to educate their daughters.

And yet, of course everyone wants to know the latest fashions, and every sensible woman will model her own attire, to a reasonable extent, after the prevailing styles. Variety is the spice of life in the fashionable world quite as much as in the kitchen. No one likes to wear the same old gown, cut in the same old way, forever. That is, no young and attractive woman does; neither should she. It is the duty of woman to make the most of the charms with which Nature has endowed her. No woman has a right to go unkempt, to be anything but neat and tidy in appearance, or to be dowdy and gloomy and depressing in her mental attitude. Woman's business is to-day, as much as ever, to brighten the home, and make life brighter for those around her. And, as we all know, if she can make home a pleasanter place by wearing pretty gowns, it is her duty to do so, so far as she is able.

Our fine illustration, designed and copyrighted particularly for COMFORT, will give many hints for our readers by which they may well profit. This is pre-eminently a "fur-winter." Furs are worn everywhere and on everything. Dresses are edged with fur; childrens' clothes are trimmed with it; and even party dresses and light evening gowns have heavy bands of fur, with lace, by way of contrast.

The little neck boa, shown at the top of the picture, is one of the most popular and useful little things offered in the fur line. It only goes around the neck and crosses. At one end is the tail of the animal of whose fur the boa is made, and at the other are the claws and head, with open glass eyes and showing its teeth in a most ferocious manner. In the more expensive boas the entire thing is made from the skin of the river-sable or mink with head and tail and claws left on; but in the cheaper furs of course the fur is cut and sewed to simulate the animal. These boas are convenient as a warm neck wrap for nearly all times of the year, and as they are comparatively inexpensive, they are more generally worn than any other kind. The old-fashioned long boa is still worn however, by those who can afford them, and there is an unmistakable air of luxury about them, especially when they are made of the more expensive furs like lear, angora or lynx, that is lacking in the short boa. The latter may be bought—of imitation fur, it is true, but of very good quality—as low as a dollar and a half; and prices range, according to quality, from that to twelve dollars. A very good mink boa, however, can be purchased at any of the leading dry goods houses, for from three to five dollars.

The Tam o' Shanter cap has always been considered a convenient piece of headgear, although not very dressy. This year, by the addition of a singly fancy feather—as in the illustration—or by a wing at the side, it takes on a jaunty effect that makes it quite presentable elsewhere than on the street. The hand-knit and crocheted Tam o' Shanters continue to be most popular with school-girls.

COMFORT'S fur capelet is entirely new this winter, and has many qualities to recommend it. As will be seen, the ends come down in front, suggesting the old pelerines of our mothers and grandmothers. This is a very sensible return to old customs. The warmth of the fur is not so much needed over the arms, as across the chest and stomach. The fur cape of a year or two ago was apt to "bind" the arms, and often proved uncomfortable to wear. The COMFORT Capelet has a high standing collar, which protects the throat and even the ears. It has a full shoulder-surface, and long, pointed tabs in front. It may be worn with any coat or without one; and in fact it is being used by many to modernize last year's jacket. With it is carried either a plain muff of the same kind of fur, or a fancy one (like the picture) of ribbon and fur. An ingenious woman can make such a muff as this either of cloth like her jacket, trimmed with fur and ribbon, or of velvet or plush. The cloth or velvet cape with full shoulder-cape edged with fur is very much worn, as predicted earlier in the season. It is so convenient to slip on over the big sleeves that at present have full swing, that any woman who goes out much should have one. And yet, it is not warm enough to wear in the coldest of weather, a closer fitting garment being then necessary.

The large hat is the popular hat to-day, not only among young women but with many whose hair begins to show streaks of gray. They are coquettish in shape, turned up at the side or back, or both, and trimmed with velvet, ribbon, feathers and wings. Very few flowers are used this winter as hat-trimmings. A word should be said right here, about the wearing of fancy feathers, aigrettes and wings. Do you know that the wholesale slaughter of innocent birds in this and other countries is something appalling? And that some of the choicest and most beautiful varieties, as well as the sweet singing birds, are becoming almost extinct in many places where they were formerly the most plenty? And that all this is merely to gratify the vanity of selfish and fashionable women who imagine themselves much more fashionably dressed if decked out with the feathers, or perhaps the poor little stuffed bodies of those dear little birds? Be very careful, then in selecting your hat trimmings. If you must use wings or quills, choose only those of fowls, as they are not for food, and not birds prey, and never those of the smaller birds that God made to brighten his fields and woods, or to make life merry with song. And better eschew such decorations altogether.

The central figure in our illustration is an exceedingly comfortable looking one. In that long, warm, cloth garment, with its shoulder cape and long revers of fur, its loose full sleeves and warm fur cuffs, this young lady looks as though she might ride to the north pole with perfect comfort. Her hat, too, is most sensible. It is close and warm and one which the widest and cannot dislodge. Many ladies in cold climates have ear-laps added which turn up under the hat in ordinary weather, but which can be pulled down and used as a protection in the sharpest zero weather. Of course this long garment is most advisable for riding long distances in electric or cable cars, or in a sleigh after a good horse. For walking on the town streets it would be found cumbersome and so tire the wearer unnecessarily. The short velvet and astrachan jacket at the side of it is more advisable for walking purposes. This waist, either as it is, or with a short, full gored skirt, from five to fifteen inches deep, is exceedingly stylish. This particular one is made of astrachan fur with heavy velvet revers, cuffs, inside collar and waist-band. Any COMFORT reader, however, might make it at home, either of astrachan cloth, which costs only about two dollars a yard and comes fifty-four inches wide, or of velvet or plush. Such a garment is exceedingly desirable for street or church wear, or for receptions and calls. If the circular skirt is desired, a pattern should be procured—it is not included in published pattern houses. Please do not send to us for them, as we have, as yet, no pattern branch to our establishment.

"Costly thy raiment as the purse can buy" was the advice given to Polonius Shakespeare's characters to another—and very good advice it is too; if one only remembers not to go *beyond* what the purse can buy," and not be left in that condition afterwards best described "as though an elephant had sat down on it."

It is always a comfort to know that one's advice and effort is appreciated. And I was more than gratified to see on our Boston fashionable thoroughfares of Boston, in front of a celebrated and exclusive tailor, a young girl dressed exactly like the more sensible sister whose plain, common sense costume was pictured in our last issue. Among a crowd of showily dressed girls this young woman seemed a living exposition of the theory that a really well dressed woman is a sensibly dressed one. It seems that there are common sense girls on the fashionable boulevards as well as in the country.

Nowadays every fashionable woman belongs to at least one club. Many of them belong to a dozen and devote most of their time to clubs.

Although COMFORT never advocates the ultra fashionable, where it opposes good sense, it has started a new club which is destined to become popular in every State and town in the Union. COMFORT'S Philanthropy Club, which begins the year in another part of this paper, is not a fad; it is a study of a most fascinating and interesting subject. We advise every woman to find and read what our new contributor "Digitus" has to say of the science of "Palmistry or the hand—an old fashion, as old as the world, newly revived.

NEW YEAR FASHIONS.

ODDITIES.

The railroad service of the United States gives employment to about 1,000,000 people.

Canada pensions off its veterans.

In China two towels are sewn together, holes are cut for the arms to eye, and the owner has a new coat.

A baby boy in Indiana weighed at birth, weighed 64 pounds, wears a six and a half hat and a number 10 shoe.

Mr. Cleveland is the only president who was married in the White House, or who had a child born there.

A California chicken thief walked fifty miles recently, with seven ballot-boxes on his body, before he was captured.

A Connecticut pocket-knife has 30 blades, shears, files, pincers and other tools, and weighs only one-eighth of an ounce.

Of sixteen large cities San Francisco shows most improvement in the last decade, Providence, R. I. has the fewest, 1 to 22,624.

Rubenovich's estate of the earth's fertile region, is square miles, is 28,289,200; steppe, 15,901,000; desert, 4,180,000; polar region, 4,368,000.

The Victoria railroad bridge over the St. Lawrence at Montreal is two miles long, cost over 5,000,000, contains 10,000 tons of iron and 3,000,000 cubic feet of masonry.

The largest single shaft of sandstone ever quarried was taken out on the south shore of Lake Superior last spring. It was 110 feet long, 10 feet square at the base and tapered to four feet square.

A Pennsylvania woman discovered the other day that her baby had fallen down a well. She aroused the neighbors, but rather than risk delay, she slid down the windlass herself and rescued the child, bringing it up unconscious, but in time to save its life.

He retired school teachers who have taught a required length of time.

A million gold dollars weigh 3,683.8 pounds, while the same money in silver weighs 57,600 pounds.

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CONDUCTED BY FLORENCE H. WYNNE.

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The AVERAGE housekeeper regards the idea of made-over dishes as just as disagreeable, as the ordinary small boy does the idea of made-over trousers from his father's. And yet a good housewife knows, or ought to, that made-over dishes are often better than new ones.

In some other countries, people live, not only in much more economically, but far better than the average family in this country. And this is not wholly because they buy rich, juicy meats, on the theory that the best is always the cheapest in the long run; but because over there the average housekeeper saves every scrap of food, even to crusts and bones, knowing that they will help to make up into a savory dish for another meal. Most women know they can often make over a dress so that it will be prettier and more attractive than when it was new. But most women do not know that they can make over a remnant of beef, or a leg of mutton, so that it will be much more gratifying to the taste than when it appeared on the table, hot and juicy, fresh from the oven.

An English housewife, like a French cook, saves everything. Cold baked beans can be made into a delicious soup, or cooked with cold shreds in a little water and adding pepper, salt and tiny squares of salt pork. Turkey or chicken bones, even if you think they are picked clean, can be made up into delicious soups.

Cold vegetables may be utilized in the same way; in fact, there are a hundred ways by which appetizing and wholesome dishes might be offered the home circle; and this gives a much greater variety of living. During the cold winter weather, too many families are treated to a big roast on Sunday and then to cold meat the rest of the week, with no attempt at a variety. Comfort's kitchen motto is to the effect that a happy family is a well-fed family, and that does not necessarily mean that it is expensively fed.

Take bread, for instance. Beyond making toast or a bread-pudding, and that, too often, after a most unpalatable fashion, the average housekeeper has no idea what to do with stale pieces. Toast should not be made of bread that is very dry—as no amount of wetting or disguising in butter or cream, can make it taste really fresh and nice. And let us note right here, that when bread is once mouldy, the only advisable thing to do with it is to throw it away. I have visited in places where everything else about the table was dainty and nice, and yet the morning toast, browned and buttered to a tempting degree, was made of mouldy bread; and of course it was simply impossible to swallow it. The wise way is never to let bread get into that condition.

The bread for about to be carefully watched, and should be thoroughly scalded and dried before receiving each fresh lot of bread. Then, after every batch, all the left-over pieces should be disposed of. Any pieces of bread or toast that are left over at table should be put in the oven until they are a pale brown and crisp; and then rolled and sifted a rolling pin quite fine. Or they may be cut in half-inch squares and treated in the same way when they will be "croutons," and may be used in soups. The browned crumbs are especially useful for dishes that require browning; or anything to be fried in egg and crumbs. These will keep any length of time if put in a jar or in a dry place, and they are excellent eaten with milk. Children especially, are very fond of these crumbs in milk and this is a healthy dish to give them between meals, when so many children tease for something to eat. For it is not well, when they are hungry, to refuse them, unless it is pretty near meal-time. Children's digestive organs work faster than old peoples'; and when her demand something to eat is the result of the forenoon or afternoon, it is because Nature is behind them clamoring for food. Instead of giving them rich pies and cakes, at such times, just try browned bread-crumbs and milk.

Another good way to prepare crumbs for scalloped dishes, is to put a colander into a bowl or dish, and break stale crumbs of bread into small pieces; rub them with the hands and then through the colander. This quicker than grating and makes the crumbs fine and free from lumps.

If you want an economical and wholesome pudding, you can make a new kind by soaking about one quart of the crumbs in cold water. When quite soft, squeeze dry and rub with a wooden spoon. Add one cup of flour, one-half cup chopped suet, one-half cup molasses, one-half cup raisins, one-half cup sugar, a little grated nutmeg and ginger and two beaten eggs, with sufficient milk to moisten. Bake in moderate oven about one hour, and serve either with butter, or with the cream-sauce given in COMFORT'S Christmas number.

Before we go on with some other kinds of **pudding that are original with us, let us consider some warmed over meat-dishes. Since the dinner begins with meat and ends with pudding, that would seem the natural way. Wouldn't it?**

Let us serve our oysters first.

Do you know how to cook oysters on skewers? Probably not, since this is one of the dishes we have experimented with, and flatter ourselves is presented now to the public for the first time. It is a dish that is very easily prepared, and ought to be very popular. Skewers, you remember, were described in the last number also, and as they can be made at home, every housewife should be provided with them. Our grandmothers, in the days of kitchen fireplaces, found them indispensable.

For skewered oysters, first see that your skewers are clean. Then carefully cut slices a piece of bacon cut into a small and very thin square. String on the skewer, oysters and bacon alternately, running the skewers through the hard part of the oysters only. Place skewers, each end on the opposite sides of a baking dish, which should be deep enough to allow the oysters to hang without touching the bottom. Bake in a hot oven for ten minutes. Place the skewers on toast and pour over them the juice which has run into the dish. Serve at once.

Do you see this scallop-shell? and do you know that they are very much used to serve fish or oysters on? The food to be served should be arranged on them before cooking, and nicely browned in the oven. Then the shells, on plates, are placed before each member of the household, who find a nice dish both wholesome and hot. Anyone living near the coasts where scallop-shells are found may easily supply themselves with them, or may get them by sending to any of the large kitchen-furnishing houses.

As soap comes next on the bill of fare, let us try an original and most appetizing way. If the cold meats and poultry have been used in other ways, there will remain the bones which, boiled together, make excellent soup. Put all the bones with a small piece of carrot, turnip, onion and celery, a sprig of parsley if you have it, a few spices and a small bunch of herbs into a stew pan, and cover with water. Boil gently three or four hours. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Thicken with a little corn-starch if desired. This soup is improved by adding a small quantity of Worcestershire sauce. Take the pieces of fat and onion that have been strained from curry sauce, and put in also; it will add to the flavor and nothing will be wasted.

Turkey, chicken, rabbit or game, warmed in white sauce, is very nice. Add mushrooms to this way:—Melt one tablespoonful of butter in a saucepan. When boiling stir in one tablespoonful flour, one-fourth teaspoonful salt, one-fourth teaspoonful pepper, and add gradually one cup milk or milk and water, heated. Stir quickly until well mixed, and boil one minute. Take one pint of chopped meat, and one small onion, and put all into the sauce. Place on the back of the stove about fifteen minutes to thoroughly heat it. Remove the onion before serving.

CURRIED MEATS.

For those who like curry, a simple way to prepare a dish is to cut all the fat and skin from meat or poultry and fry with a small onion ten minutes, stirring frequently. Mix one heaping tablespoonful of flour, one even tablespoonful of curry powder, or less if you do not like it strong, and one teaspoonful salt and stir into the fat and onion. Then take the frying pan from the fire and add two cups of cold water, or better still, gravy or stock; put back and boil two or three minutes. This quantity of sauce is sufficient for three cups of meat which should be cut in small pieces and put into a stewpan, with the sauce strained over and boiled five minutes. Boil half a cup of rice and pile it around the edge of dish, leaving a nest in the middle, and pour the curry in the centre. If there should not be enough sauce, make one two tablespoonfuls butter to fry with the fat and onion.

MINCED MEAT.

An English method of preparing left-over meat is to put into a stewpan mutton or beef bones, with an onion, two or three whole peppers, cloves and allspice; cover a whole with water and stew for two hours. Then take out the bones, let it thicken, the liquid slightly with flour and brown with a little burnt sugar. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Mince your cold meat and add to the hot gravy. Simmer this mixture for a few minutes and serve garnished with dry toast cut in small triangular pieces.

SCALLOPED MUTTON.

Another method of warming over cold mutton is to put in a baking dish a layer of bread crumbs, then a layer of mutton cut into thin slices, then cold boiled macaroni cut in small pieces. **Over this pour some gravy; repeat this process till the dish is full. Cover the whole with a thick layer of crumbs moistened with one-fourth cup melted butter. Season** each layer with salt and pepper. Bake until nicely browned. Tomato sauce may be used instead of gravy.

Another original dish which we are able to present to our readers this month is known as

COTTAGE PIE.

A nice dish may be made with left-over meat and vegetables in this way. Put in a baking dish a layer of cold cooked meat or mutton, cut into small pieces, then one of carrots, turnips and onions (cooked, of course), with a little chopped parsley. Then add another layer of meat and alternate layers of vegetables, with salt and pepper. Pour over this stock or gravy and cover the whole with mashed potatoes. Bake until the potatoes are nicely browned.

Now a word about these "paper collars" for dishes passing on to puddings. It is no longer necessary to buy expensive fancy pudding dishes, in order to set a table with attractive table. These collars are made of white paper and come folded as seen in the part of the cut. They will stretch to fit any baking-dish and entirely conceal it from view, and as they are exceedingly pretty in themselves and cost but a trifle (at any large crockery establishment), every housewife may have one. The following pudding which is entirely original also with us, and which is so simple and so healthful that it should become a favorite, is one that is easily made and dainty deserts, needs no collar, as it is best served on a platter or large deep dish. The dish is known as

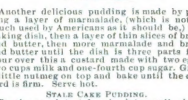
PUDDING-COLLAR CLOSED.

RICED PEACHES.

Boil one-half cup sugar with a little salt, and a tablespoonful or so, of sugar, for twenty minutes. While it is boiling, take as many clothes, (unbleached cotton is the best, although any strong cloth will do,) as you have people to dinner; put one or two extra, if you desire. Wring them out of hot water. Lay them over a small bowl. Spread the rice over the cloth about one-third of an inch thick. Then take some of as many halves of canned peaches as you have cloths. Lay one in the centre of each cloth and fill the cavity at the core with rice and a bit of lemon peel or stick cinnamon. Fit the other half of the peach over it, and draw the cloth up close around the peach, carefully, covering the peaches smoothly with the rice. If peaches are not convenient, use canned apricots, plums or any small fruit in the same way, first removing the stones in whole fruits. Small apples pared and cored are delicious used in this way. After the cloth is drawn tightly over the riced-fruit, tie it very securely around the neck, as the cut shows. Then steam half an hour, longer if apples are used. Take the cloths off with care and surround the rice with a dish of either boiled custard, whipped cream or apple sauce.

PUDDING-CLOTH.

IN THE PUDDING CLOTH.



RICED PEACHES.

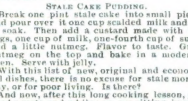
Another delicious pudding is made by putting a layer of marmalade, (which is not so much used by Americans as it should be,) in a baking dish, then a layer of thin slices of bread and butter, then more marmalade and bread and butter until the dish is three parts full. Pour over this a custard made with two eggs, two cups of milk, one cup of sugar, a little nutmeg on top and bake until the custard is firm. Serve hot.

STALE CAKE PUDDING.

Break one pint of stale cake into small pieces and pour over it one cup of scalded milk and let it soak. Then add a custard made with two eggs, one cup of milk, one cup of sugar and a little nutmeg. Flavor to taste. Grate nutmeg on the top and bake in a moderate oven. Serve with jelly.

With this list of new, original and economical dishes, we have no excuse for stale monotony, or for poor living. Is there?

And now, after this long cooking lesson, you need a rest; and while you are sitting in your kitchen rocker look at a dish to our new department, "COMFORT'S Palmistry Club," where you will find something unique and interesting; something you can not find duplicated anywhere else in America.



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HOW ROXY FOUND "CHILDREN'S DAY."

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY MAY PHILLIPS TATRO.

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OXY had lived with Shag longer than ever since she could remember. Now she was eight years old, but small for her age.

It was Rocky here, and Roxy there, until the poor child grew so weary and discouraged that nothing seemed left her to relieve her over-wrought feelings in a flood of tears.

And then Mrs. Foster would remind her that if she had to taken pity on her, she would be there home from the poor-house, she would be there at the present time. Roxy often wondered if the poor-house could be much worse than the place she now called home.

Poor little Roxy! She had but one friend on the whole Foster farm, and that was "Shag," the curly little black dog, who, being in trouble himself, felt for the lonely child. The two waifs were united in a bond of sympathy and pity for each other. And so Roxy found a firm friend who loved her most faithfully, and who in return received all the affection of her starved little heart.

I do not think there is, in all the world, anything so touching and pitiful as a little child's love—it means a child who has never received much affection, and who has been taught to hide its emotions.

Roxy had learned to read a little, having attended the district school several months during the two winters after she was six years old. But Mrs. Foster thought it a waste of time to let her go in the summer time, and said that the girl would have to work for her living, and would be better off without any cranky notions about education. So poor little Roxy was a drudge through the long summer days. When other children were running about, and growing strong, her thin, stooping shoulders were bearing burdens that would have been heavy for much stronger ones.

About a month before "Children's Day," Roxy read in her slow, uncertain way a long article about its accompanying exercises, its floral decoration, its music and its prizes, to be given children who were to take part, and for whom it was especially observed, and celebrated.

And then the lonely child began to wonder why she could have no such days—no flowers, no music or pleasure of any kind.

The brown, tangled head rested upon Shag's tearful form down the sad little face, and the thin, undeveloped form trembled with the great sobs that came straight from the grieving heart of this child who had known so little of joy or happiness.

Shag kissed away her tears in his doggish way, and did his best to cheer up his only friend's sorrowful spirits.

At last a happy thought struck Roxy. Why could not she and Shag go to the city and find Children's Day? Why had she never thought of that before? Children's Day must be for all children—why not for her?

So Roxy planned and dreamed about the day when she would start to find Children's Day. Not a word did she say to the Fosters, for she well knew that would mean death to all her plans, but she whispered her secret to Shag, charging him over and over not to mention it.

She kept the piece of paper with the date of the auspicious day upon her bosom, in a happy dream of anticipation from that time. The day of all days dawned clear and full of sunshine. Long before any of the Foster family were awake, Roxy stole quietly out of the house, with Shag close at her heels, her little bare feet brushing the dew from the grass, her limp pink sunbonnet falling over her face, and her patched calico dress fluttering in the gentle breeze that blew so sweet and fresh against her face.

On she trudged, never once thinking of turning back, or with the least regret for those she had left behind. Had she not all that cared for or loved her following close by her side? As she was passing one house, a large dog ran out to the road barking furiously, and Roxy was frightened terribly, but suddenly a hand being thrown down in the thick dust of the road she was not hurt. Shag, being a little frightened too, ran between her feet, throwing her down; but when he saw that something unpleasant had befallen his beloved mistress he fell upon the cause of all their trouble and reduced him to state of apparently abject fear.

And now a thought came to Roxy that gave her pleasure as well as anxiety. The piece of paper she had treasured so carefully said that each child must bring flowers, if only a few, but where would she find them? Of course, if Children's Day was for her, she must take some kind of flowers, or else they might not let her and Shag go. She turned into a strip of woodland lying along one side of the road, and found handful after handful of sweet wood-violets, looking up at her with their dark fragrant faces.

The birds sang, as they hopped and flitted from limb to limb. It was so cool and restful within the shadows that Roxy and Shag rested a long time before they started out again, and when they turned once more into the road, Roxy's pink sunbonnet was full to overflowing with sweet wood-violets.

How tired these two foot-sore travelers were before the spires of the city came into their eyes! Poor little Shag limped painfully but bravely along, and Roxy could scarcely move one little red, blistered foot after the other.

At last, the streets are before them. More than one curious gaze of the passers-by are turned in their direction. Shag limps along, his tongue hanging out, panting and thirsty; Roxy walks slowly behind, sunbonnet in hand filled with violets, her tangled hair falling about her face, little rivulets down each cheek made by tears and dust, the faded calico dress hanging limply upon the thin, childish form, the swollen, blistered feet, bare and red; all telling of an uncared-for child, a lonely, unloved creature, yet, none the less "one of His little ones."

Up the long street the strange looking pair make their way, eagerly watching for the place where she could find Children's Day. Finally they paused in front of a church to rest. At that moment the sweet tones of an organ floated out to them, and a chorus of children's voices rang upward like bird-songs.

Roxy was all excitement and glad expectation now. Her little body quivered with joy and happiness.

"Oh Shag, we've found it! we've found it! Come on, poor Shag, and we'll go in where it you any more. We'll have such a nice time, Shag. Just hear the music; and I can most smell the posies the pretty dolls about, can't you, Shag?"

Quietly the child, followed by the faithful Shag, hurried into the vestibule of the church, and on up the aisle, never stopping a moment until the altar was reached. Then, pausing in front of the kindly-faced minister, Roxy held out her odd pink sunbonnet, with an eagerness to bestow her offering, spilling her sweet blossoms.

Her voice rang through the church clearly and distinctly:

"Please take my flowers, won't you? I've come so far, Shag and me, and we're tired and hungry; but we've found Children's Day, and you'll let us stay, won't you? I brought the posies—all I could find, Shag found one, too. But here she began to realize that the great church was full of strangers, and that they were all looking at her. But there was not a smile; not even among the children.

It was so painfully, so startling, that it appealed to every heart, young and old. The now frightened, tired child was sure she was going sobbing in that large assembly.

Roxy did not know that one not a moment. A woman with a face shining with purity and nobleness, took her by the hand and seating her in her own pew, with its long gray-stained face with her own fine, soft handkerchief, kissed her a sweet kiss, and said: "Poor little Roxy had never been talked to before.

And that was the first time she had drawn a lesson and talked to the children so beautifully about the incident that had just transpired, that Roxy, who heard it, never forgot. The impress of that ragged child's earnest faith, her struggle to reach something bright and sweet in life, will live with them while life lasts.

What became of Roxy? After careful inquiry and proper action, the sweet-faced lady adopted her. And as Roxy did not think she could live without "Shag," her only friend in the lonely time, before "she found Children's Day," he lived to a fat old age with his old and his new mistresses.

LEVI'S LESSON.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY O. W. NOBLE.

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"LEVI," No answer.

"Levi," in a loudertone. Still no answer. "Levi Foster, you deaf, or what ails ye?"

"Yes, I hear, what do you want now? Seems as if I can never could get a minnit's peace in this house," and Farmer Potter's attention to the almanac he was reading and hung it on its nail in the kitchen.

"What ye doin' to-day?" continued his wife, in no wise daunted by the impatient tone of her lord.

"I dunno, I'm busy."

"Can't ye take the ox team and go up in the wood lot an' git some the wood for summer, while the sled'll run?"

"I never see anybody in sich a twitter about wood as you be, exclaimed the farmer. "Pshaw! thing in March you begin about that wood, an' you keep it up; workin' up to a regular epidemic, till I'm sick o' hearin' it. There's time enough; I'll git wood for ye as soon as I git round to it."

"Yes," said his wife, stopping in her work of kneading an immense mass of dough, "that's just what you say every time, an' you allers put off, an' put off, till the spring comes, an' comes on, and then when the wood gives out, you say there can't nobody leave to wait on women folks, an' I have to rake and scrape round the yard, till there ain't a twig left. I ain't goin' to be so tormented another year, you mee see."

"Well, do shet up, an' to-morrow I'll go after wood. I can't go to-day, to-morrow, I'll git somethin' else to do," and so saying the farmer slammed the door as he went out muttering: "Wimmen are allers growlin' about somethin'."

"What ye goin' to do, ma?" asked Hannah, the oldest of the flock of children who crowded the Potter farm-house.

"I hain't just made up my mind yit," answered her mother, "but I'll do somethin'. I ain't goin' to be so bothered this year without savin' or doin' somethin' to make ye go to school; you'll see. Come now, it's time for you to git ready, an' I'll tell you what I decide on."

The next day proved a very stormy one, and the next was cold and rainy, so Farmer Levi put off getting wood from day to day, till spring set in, and only one or two small loads of fire wood had been drawn from the wood lot, about two miles from the house.

Every body was busy with the thousand and one spring jobs that come to the New England farmer, and no one had time to go for wood. (All this happened in the days of fireplaces, when wood was the universal fuel, and a coal stove an undreamed of luxury.)

So matters went on through the bright spring days, till "Maple sugarin' time."

One bright summer morning, Mrs. Potter exclaimed, "Sakes alive! I never come to gettered ye I be. Here your father's got about a dozen men helpin' him in the hay fields, an' they'll be as hungry as a lot of hosses, an' there ain't not a stick o' wood can I find except three big logs I had ye drag in last Christmas Eve! Ye be a little goin' to be wore out chasin' after wood any longer," said "Ma," nodding her head emphatically.

"You go down to the pork barrel, Hanner, an' take out a good big chunk, an' put it up an' put it in the dinner pot, while I git the garden sass ready."

"Don't see how you're goin' to cook pork an' stuff without a fire," remarked Hannah, as she started for the cellar.

"Never you mind that," replied her mother, "jest do as I tell ye, an' ask no questions."

Hannah's curiosity was by no means satisfied by this answer, but, in those days, children were accustomed to instant obedience, and she was obliged to be silent and await further developments. When she returned with a goodly piece of salt pork, her mother had the big dinner pot all ready to put it into, and when it was washed and put in, with the proper quantity of water, Mrs. Potter took the pot, pork, water and oil, and going out to the empty space in front of the wood-pile should have been, hung the pot over one of the big logs, where the sun would shine upon it in full strength, and retired to the house.

At the proper time the various vegetables were added, as if the pot hung over a good blazing fire, the table was set as usual, and Mrs. Potter announced the coming of her lord with his troop of haymakers.

Farmer Potter's eyes opened wider than they had done for many a day, when he saw the tiny place yawning black and cold, instead of being filled as usual with the blazing logs.

"What on airth," exclaimed he, "ain't dinner going yit? I'm bout starved an' so are the rest of the boys."

"Well," answered his wife, calmly, "I don't know whether 'tis or not, but I'll go out an' see," and out the door she went, carrying the big meat fork with her, and returned with the meat, in her hand like some weapon of warfare.

Such a shout as the men set up, when after gravely proceeding to lift the cover off the pot, hanging out in the sun, and trying its contents with the big fork, she returned, saying, "No, Levi, that's done yit."

Then, as he looked out of the open kitchen door, the meaning of her words dawned upon him, and he said wrathfully, "Mighty cunning ain't ye? 'Taint much of a joke, 'cordin' to my way of thinkin' but, I s'pose, you'd rather be to work as hard as we be, ye wouldn't feel quite so much like laughin'."

"Now look here, Levi Potter," said Mrs. Potter, setting her arms akimbo, and looking him squarely in the face, "I'd like to know how you s'posed I was goin' to cook dinner without any wood, unless I took up the logs? I've talked, an' talked, an' talked wood, all to no purpose, I'll git wood, I'll git wood, I'll git wood, I'll git somethin' besides talk this time."

"She's got the best of ye, Levi," said one of the haymakers, as soon as he could stop laughing, "in ye better give up an' accept the situation gracefu'."

A few moments of reflection served to convince the irate farmer that he was in the wrong this time, at any rate, and he seized the beetle and wedges from their place under the back door, saying, "Well, Catherine, git us some bread and milk or somethin' of that sort for dinner, an' I'll split up some wood the afternoon, an' if ye'll git us a good, hearty supper, I'm sure we can manage to git by. I see that you sin't bothered this way agin, for I've turned a new leaf in my life."

All hands fully enjoyed the joke, and did full justice to the bountiful supper set before them on their return from the hay field.

Mrs. Potter lived many years after that episode, but never again was known to be troubled for lack of wood. And when she received from the village where this occurred, it was often a source of wonderment to her neighbors that "Mis' Potter's man was allers so fierce to git a big pile o' wood ready, an' git it all cut up an' ready to burn before the spring work came on."

And when they spoke of this to her, and betrayed the unwillingness of their spouses to "go and do likewise," she would tell them the story of that summer noon, and say, "There's a good deal o' truth in the story. And if you want to 'bout the boy stealin' apples, that the old man threw stones at when he knew he didn't do any good. I tried words till I was sick o' 'em, an' hadn't no faith in grass for anything of that kind, so I tried stones, an' the sharp edge hitch him go without his dinner, for once, an' that worked first rate. Anyway you can't allers let cows touch a man through his vittles, an' if you try some such plan as I did, you'll find ye won't be troubled for lack o' wood agin in a hurry."

Whether any of her neighbors took her advice and followed her example, history does not, but the foregoing story is strictly true, and told as one of the amusing incidents of the family history among the descendants of the Potter family, to this day.

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CHILDREN'S CIRCLE OF COMFORT.

CHAT WITH UNCLE CHARLIE.

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HIS is a bonny fire-laddie, children, blowing his horn to clear the way on the crowded streets. Why does he want to clear the way? Because somewhere, a fire has broken out and there is danger of somebody's house or business block being burned to the ground. And according to the law in all cities, every other kind of team or car must keep out of the way to let the hose carts and engines with their company of brave men, hurry to the fire and have a chance to fight it before it gets too much headway.

How many of you ever went to a fire in a big city? A great many, no doubt; and yet there are thousands of country children who haven't. And I am quite sure that very few city boys and girls could describe the entire workings of the fire department in their own town.

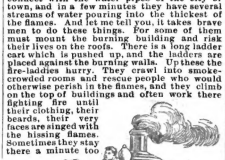
Let us talk about it.

You know first, that there is what is called a fire-alarm system in every large town; that is, a system of electric wires, all connecting with a central office and reaching out to every part of the city. Stations are scattered all over the town, where an office or an engine-house is opened. In the large cities these engine-houses are very fine buildings. In each station, there is an alarm and a set of instruments much like telegraph instruments, all of which connect with the bells in the engine-house, and many of the church bells. Then at the corners of certain streets or at some other convenient place, are fire-alarm boxes. These are scattered about conveniently, so that no building should be left very far from one. They are fastened on the walls of buildings or on big lamp posts, and inside these boxes an electric bell connects by wire with the whole fire-alarm system of the city.

Now what do you do, in case a fire breaks out in your house, or your father's office? Well, the first thing to be done is to run as fast as possible to the nearest fire-alarm box. In it will usually be painted "Key will be found at so-and so's"—which will be some place close by. The boxes have to be kept locked to keep mischievous boys from ringing them and raising a false alarm. You run and fit the key, open the box and touch the electric bell. In less time than it takes me to write it or you to read it, the little instruments in every station in the city, are clicking out the fact that there is a fire in your vicinity, and every bell in the city is ringing out the number of your fire district. Now, in a regularly equipped engine-house, the company—that is, a captain and four or six or eight or ten men—live all the time. They stay there all day and sleep there at night, except the watchmen who have to stay up and be ready should an alarm come in in the night. Their reading and writing rooms are up stairs. Down stairs, opening right on the street, by means of great glass doors, is one large main room where the carts, the hose, and the ladders, are kept, all ready to start at a moment's notice. At the back of this is a place for the horses, of which there are three or four and sometimes five. In the centre of the main room, the harnesses are kept suspended on hooks from the ceiling, all in place and ready to drop onto the horses at a moment's notice.

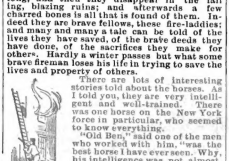
PUTTING OUT THE FIRE.

Now, suppose an alarm is run in, in one of these station houses. Do you think the men have to go into the stalls and lead the horses out? O, no; not unless they are new at the business. A well-trained horse—and every horse belonging to a fire department must be an intelligent animal—recognizes an alarm himself; for he can hear it in his stall. And he restless, wide-awake boy was ever more eager to run to a fire than many of these noble horses. At the first call of the alarm they start nervously. A man is always in attendance; he removes the bar from their stalls, and these horses rush madly to their own particular place under their harnesses—never making a mistake. Another man touches a wire and down come the harnesses on the horses' backs. In less than a minute they are buckled on and the prancing horses are ready to dash out of the doors which are being opened by another man. Meanwhile the firemen have seized their fire-proof glazed hats, and their oil-skin coats and are getting into their hose-wagons and carts, each in his own place; and in less than two minutes, often, from the time you touched off that fire-alarm, the entire force in your district, men, horses and all, are rushing towards you. It is easy enough to find a particular house, when they are once in the neighborhood; and in most instances, so perfect is their system, the fire is all out in a few minutes more. That is, if it was a small one, of course and has not gained much headway. But suppose they go to a large building, and the fire has gained such headway that the first batch of firemen and men, cannot easily subdue it—what then? Why, then a second alarm and, sometimes, even a third is rung in, and companies from all parts of the city come tearing down to the scene of the fire. See how the horses dash along as if they understood the danger and enjoyed the excitement as much as anybody. In the little light cart which goes ahead of the fire engine, the trumpeter blows his horn; horse-cars stop and heavy teams get out of the way while the engine, the hose-cart, the ladder wagon and all, rush madly by. Everybody on the street turns and looks and small boys run wildly after the engine; for there is something in human nature that makes everyone interested in a fire.



FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!

In a few minutes the brave laddies with their hose and ladders are at the fire. They connect the hose with the hydrants, which in their turn connect with the water pipes of the city or town, and in a few minutes they have several streams of water pouring into the thickest of the flames. And let me tell you, it takes brave men to do these things. For some of them must mount the burning building and risk their lives on the roofs. There is a long ladder cart which is pushed up, and the ladders are placed against the burning walls. Up these the fire-ladies hurry. They crawl into smoke-crowded rooms and rescue people who would otherwise perish in the flames, and they climb on the top of buildings and often work there fighting fire until their clothing, their beards, their very faces are singed with the hissing flames. Sometimes they stay there a minute too long, and then they disappear in the fall ing, blazing ruins; and afterwards a few charred bones is all that is found of them. Indeed they are brave fellows, these fire-ladies; and many and many a tale can be told of the lives they have saved, of the brave deeds they have done, of the sacrifices they make for others. Hardly a winter passes but what some brave fireman loses his life in trying to save the lives and property of others.



SCALING THE WALL.

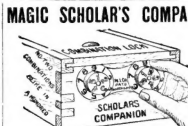
"Old Ben," said one of the men who worked with him, "was the best horse I have ever seen. Why, his intelligence was not almost, but really, human. He knew as much as any man, and more than many I have seen. With all this he was a worker. Horses in general can only be worked in one place when in the fire service. That is to say, a horse that is used to being driven on the left side of a team will not work well on the right, and vice versa, and a horse used to the engine will not be any good on the tender. But with old Ben it made no difference. Any day we wished to change him we would simply take him over to the vehicle he was to draw and put him between the shafts for a moment. That settled it. Back he would go to his stall, but the moment an alarm sounded, swish! away, would go Old Ben to his new place, as surely as if he had practiced it twenty years. Sometimes we would get mixed up ourselves and try to get Ben away from his assigned place, but it was no use. He had his orders from the foreman and always executed them in spite of all our protests. We would try to drive him by the shafts assigned to him, we would hoot at him, pull at him, yank him. But that was all the good it did us. The old fellow knew his business and only replied by laying his ears back and shaking his head."

An interesting story is told too about another fire-horse named Jerry, who had been sold to a farmer in his old age. Jerry was used to drive a milk wagon. One day he left him with a load of full milk cans outside a house. Suddenly a fire-company came down the street at full speed. Jerry recognized the sound of the bell, and started off in full pursuit. The owner soon succeeded in tracing his horse to the fire, and found him there with a ruined remnant of wagon but not a single can. You see poor old Jerry was just as crazy over a fire as you would be, boys.

Now before I close, I want to call your attention to the new department which will be devoted to COMFORT'S Palmistry Club. Don't you know what palmistry is? Well, read that, and see. UNCLE CHARLIE.

A Pennsylvania man with a shock of brilliant auburn hair replies in the name of Lucretia Hitt. Richead.

MAGIC SCHOLAR'S COMPANION.



This Combination secures its contents by means of a **Real Combination Lock**, similar to those in use on burglar and fire proof safes, and yet so simple that any child knowing the proper combination can readily operate it, but **one scholar cannot open another's companion**, as hundreds are made without any two combinations being alike. The combination is handsomely finished in ash and cherry (either cherry body and ash lid or ash body and cherry lid), has dovetailed corners, and is divided into neat compartments for pencils, pens, chalk, sponge &c. This is an article prized by every little scholar who owns one, and as its neat appearance commends it to the use of every child, none should be without it. Given free as a premium for two yearly subscribers to "Comfort" at 25 cents each, or sent postpaid on receipt of 17 cents; one dozen by express, $1.25. They are fast sellers. Address COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

Owing to the Great Demand for Dolls and Other Indestructible Goods of this Nature, we here Illustrate a Dozen Special Low Priced Premiums for Trial Subscribers to COMFORT.

Girl Jointed & Boy Doll with Suit, Free.

Bright firesiders, artists, and mechanics have been at work for years trying to perfect low-price, jointed indestructible dolls (but can be made to sit down, bend over, stand on their heads, move arms and legs, and be placed in all sorts of cute positions, either when dressed or undressed, and look natural, and, as a rule, are patronized, in a most wonderful and successful manner, by every little mother, weary trials. They are beautifully finished, and, being jointed, can be placed in any natural position. The **Dressed Boy Doll**, made in same manner, not jointed, but with fancy suit of clothes to match, consisting of pretty cutaway coat, fancy shirt blouse waist, and a fine pair of pants, so you can dress and undress. It is a wonderful bargain, just one of the kind for years. Are more like the human than any doll ever put before the public. Best of all, they are sold cheap, as you can fill the bran, sawdust, or cotton, and easily see them up. We will mail one boy or girl, if charges paid, if you send 25 cents, or for three months' subscription to **Comfort**, the **Prize Story Magazine**, with the largest circulation of any monthly in the world; or send 15c., and we also include a cute little Pug Dog pup; boy and suit, girl and pup, all for 20c. Order a million of the articles will be sold this season, so we will give to the chance to get samples early and make money taking orders. Dolls, pup, or suit, postpaid, 8 for 50c. Order a dozen and a pup for one dollar. Just the thing for church fairs and the like. One agent sold one thousand. Address "Comfort," Box 268 Augusta, Me.

A PUBLIC BENEFACTOR.

The person who invented the line of goods here advertised was certainly a great public benefactor and there has never been anything produced that will have such an extended sale as these goods. They can be so easily transported that they will go to the ends of the Earth and find a ready sale in any part of this or any other country. Agents who have tried to handle them are surprised at the great quantities disposed of, and as there are millions of children who all want playthings of some sort or other, they will always be found to sell fast and at sight.

Dolls That Will Make Sick People Well.

In a recent church fair held in Boston there were a number of dolls donated, not for sale but to be sent to the children's hospital for which the fair was given. They were colored dolls. Their black faces were beautifully painted by an artist. They had real woolly hair, real stockings and shoes, and were dressed throughout with great care. The gingham frocks and white aprons made them most fetching.

The physician at the head of the hospital said afterwards that these dolls did more good than all his medicines did.

As there is a great demand for Nero Dolls we have also got a genuine PICCANINNY. Yes, colored doll babies that are too funny for anything, and every child wants one to play with. Of course, they are large size, made in the same manner, and as you will notice from cut require no dressing. The price is the same as Jointed or Boy Dolls; 12c. each, including a three months' subscription to COMFORT.

This shaggy fellow is called "Tatters" and is a fine large animal same price as Pug, 12c. each.

Red Riding Hood is about same size and costs same price as "Piccaninny" every little girl wants one at 12c. each.

The Large Pug Dog is called "Bow Wow." Costs the same as Dolls, 12c. each, postpaid.

Indestructible Stuffed Toys, Free!

WE will send, postpaid, one Doll, cat, one Chicken, one Globe, and one Elephant, to any one sending fifty cents for two years' subscription to COMFORT, which is 25c. for the Stuffed Toys, and has the largest circulation of any monthly in the world. These 8 wonderful, attractive articles, with fast selling goods have been so well advertised, and our illustration so good, that further description would seem needless. The Dolls are eighteen inches high. Cats and Elephants are life size; Elephants and Globe as large as can be entertained by a child. Millions of these goods have been sold the past few months from house to house, at Church Fairs, etc.; and agents only need to get samples for two years' subscription to COMFORT, and they can easily sell the whole assortment. Four Kittens reckoned as one of other articles. Five of any one out. Price of any one Doll, 25 cents. Order a million and a half. Cash must be paid. They all c me in bright Lithograph colors, heavy goods, and are a great success of the World's Fair year. Agents, boys or girls, young or old, get in the swim. The only Premium Dolls ever given away. Price of Dolls and toys we advertise 12 cents each including a 3 months' subscription to COMFORT, or $1.00 per dozen, postpaid.

"PITTI-SING."

THIS sweet little Japanese girl is one of the latest and daintiest subjects for a Doll. Her charming oddity is enough in itself to give her a hearty welcome in every home where there are children. The price is cheaper than the large Stuffed Dolls and toys we advertise 18 cents for 4 including a 3 months' subscription to COMFORT; or $1.00 per dozen, postpaid.

Columbian "Sailor Boy."

THIS Columbian Doll is just the thing for the very young children. With arms and legs to pull without injuring it in the least. It is an attractive and lasting souvenir of this Columbian year and just the price as other toys and Dolls and toys we advertise 12 cents each including a 3 months' subscription to COMFORT; or $1.00 per dozen, postpaid.

Owing to the great demand for these stuffed goods every month in the year, all the year round, we advise every one who has been thrown out of employment to order at least an assorted dozen to start with, and canvass for their sale at once. When selling the goods agents get 15c. each, the regular retail price, including a 3 months' subscription to COMFORT, and we furnish them for $1.00 per dozen, postage or express paid, or $3.50 for fifty, or $6.00 per hundred, express not paid. More money is being made from the sale of these goods by active home workers than from anything ever placed on the market. Address, COMFORT, Box 268, Augusta, Maine.

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A happy New Year and Comfort for all!

January is named for the heathen deity—Janus.

The lucky stone for January is the garnet which is said to bring constancy and fidelity.

The publishers ask as a special favor of their readers that in answering any advertisement appearing in this paper, they will mention the fact that they saw it in COMFORT.

According to England's foremost astrologer, the lucky days for January are the 1st, 2nd, 5th, 6th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 16th, 20th and 31st. The unlucky ones are the 3rd, 9th, 14th, 18th, 21st, 23rd, 26th, 27th and 30th. The others are of minor importance or are under mixed influences. The same authority predicts many sudden deaths, much sickness and severe epidemics. He says the latter part of the month will witness some disaster in a public place either in this country or in Europe.

There is an old song to the effect that "Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all a farm." When the song was written, doubtless this was true; but is it, now? Hardly. With the disposal of the Cherokee strip last fall when thousands of frenzied beings rushed madly for free land, and several people were killed in the crush, Uncle Sam gave away his last farm, and it is argued by many that this is a good thing, and that a new era of prosperity is now to dawn. In less than forty years, since the close of the war nearly 100,000,000 acres of virgin land have been brought under cultivation. This fact alone would account for much of the depression in value of farm products. The rest of the habitable globe in the same period only increased its cultivated acreage by 14,000,000 acres. Other causes, such as excessive railroad charges, uncertainty about the nation's finances, foolish legislation and excessive immigration of foreign pauper labor have lastly caused the farmer to believe that his lot was not a happy one. But as time goes on the intelligent farmer will have a much better chance than he has had for a few years. Banks may fail, commerce may decline, and navigation come to a stand-still; but the nation cannot fall so long as the farming population of the United States is what it is, and the country is covered with fertile farms from one side to the other. "The farmer feeds us all," and there is no going back of the returns.

January has rolled around again on the wheel of time and begins another new year. How many who were with us—beloved ones, famous ones, and seemingly indispensable ones to the world's progress—have disappeared from the arena of life since last January! How many of us will remain next January? And who of us will have to go? And yet, our motto should always be, "Look forward and not back." Let us make the most of life while we have it—not by getting all the pleasure out of it that we can, regardless of the rights of others, but by living a right life and by doing good. We have many blessings to be thankful for; and the greatest of all, often unappreciated until it is lost, is health. While it is claimed that the average duration of life has increased of late years, fewer people live to old age now than was the case forty years ago. More men live to be forty years old, but not so many live to see sixty-five and beyond. Science has helped the young, but apparently has done nothing for the old. The real causes of this greater mortality among the old are, doubtless, the greater strain imposed by the conditions of modern life which consume the vitality earlier than formerly, the lack of exercise on account of the greater facilities for getting about, improper diet and use of stimulants, and the larger percentage of people who live in cities. Every man cannot be a Gladstone and live to direct a great nation's destinies when he is past eighty-four years, but a proper attention to the laws of health will carry an increasing number of men past the age of sixty-five, and enable them to enrich modern life with the fruits o. their ripe experience. So that now, as always, the famous motto of old "Rip Van Winkle" is a wish appropriate to the new year—"May you live long and prosper."

We desire to call attention to the last page of our present number, where will be found a new department, which has no equal anywhere; as a unique, interesting and practical subject it cannot be gainsaid, and COMFORT'S Palmistry Club will cover a field that has never yet been intelligently occupied. In these days of enterprising journalism, publishers are everywhere looking out for something novel, fresh and unhackneyed to bring to their readers. After long search COMFORT has secured the services of an expert whose research into palmistry—a subject too often given over to charlatans and bogus fortune-tellers—gives him the ability to present it in a simple, interesting and scientific fashion. The good results of a knowledge of palmistry, its use in assisting errors of judgment, and its assistance in choosing a vocation for life, will all be dwelt upon in such a way that members of this novel club will be not only enlightened but astonished, and only pleased but benefitted, by the new views of this old subject. And in the near future we shall be able to give our six million readers the benefit of a plan by which they may, each and every one of them, know what is written in their own individual palms, and what bearing it may have upon their several and individual lives.

On the fourth of last month the greatest scientist of the age, Prof. John Tyndall of England died at the age of 73. He was another example of the self-made man—and the making of such a man is more difficult there than here. He was born in Ireland in 1820, and began work for himself as civil engineer in the Irish and English ordinance surveys, and with this work he was connected from 1839 to 1844. Then he was a railway engineer for three years, and so it was not until 1847, when he was 27 years old, that he really found himself in a position to study according to his own bent. A simple record of his achievements would more than fill this paper. Suffice it to say that he worked and studied in his favorite sciences, and was one of the greatest prophets and advocates living, of the theory of evolution as an explanation of the development of species; he was of the fellowship of Darwin, Spencer and Huxley, and was associated with Huxley in many of his most valuable investigations. Last year he delivered a course of lectures in this country, for which he received the sum of $22,000. This unselfishly devoted to the founding of scholarships in science in Harvard, Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania, "in aid of students who devote themselves to original research." Such a man is a loss to the world; he leaves a name which will be remembered for many years to come.

One sad thing, however, is connected with his death. The coroner's inquest showed that he died from an over-dose of chloral given him by his wife under the impression that it was magnesia. And his remark when he discovered the mistake "You have killed your John," is one that will embitter this poor wife's life until her dying day. Doubtless he regretted the thoughtless remark in the brief hour that remained to him. And yet how little reason he had all to remember. This fault, of making hasty and ill-judged remarks to those nearest and dearest to us, is not peculiar to husbands alone. How many of us have said things in the heat of anger, or under a sudden impulse, that we would have given years of our lives, afterwards, to recall? Would we part from any member of our family with a cross manner and a cross word in the morning, if we knew that never again should we see them alive? Would we ever "let the sun go down on our wrath" if we stopped to think that the sunrise might bring forth sorrow and bereavement? We can never know. And the best way, perhaps the only way, to save ourselves from life-long regret for hastily spoken words—is never to speak hastily.

BABY ROGER.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT BY HELEN M. WINSLOW.

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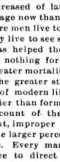

IN a slight elevation near the bustling and beautiful city of Providence in Rhode Island, stands a little old-fashioned red cottage, just exactly as it stood more than a hundred years ago. To the thousands of young people who see it every year, it is nothing but an odd, quaint little structure, hardly worth a second glance. But to the crowds of older people it brings up sweet memories of their own happy farm house and the little red school-house that used to stand at the cross-roads. While its beautiful surroundings have more interest to the present generation, little old-time cottage has a history of its own; for it marks the spot where the Williams family have lived for many generations. Away back in old Puritan days, a certain Roger Williams came over from Salem to find the same religious freedom that the other colonists had found. But alas! he did not believe exactly, in all particulars, as the Puritans and with their rigorous intolerance they had come away themselves from England to escape, the pilgrim fathers intimated to him that his room would be decidedly preferable to his company. Roger Williams then went south and settled in Rhode Island. The little red farm-house of which we have spoken, was the homestead for a hundred and fifty years, more or less, of the Williams family—and was doubtless, when first constructed, considered quite a mansion. The windows—with small square panes—were imported from England long before glass was made in this country; so it will be seen that this was quite a luxurious abode. Its interest to the present generation, however, lies principally in the fact that here was born, within the last century, Miss Betsey Williams, the last heir to the historic place; here she lived a long and useful life, never having gone aboard a steamboat or a railway car, or travelling twenty miles from her home; and here she died. But when her list of days was full, and she was about to leave this world, she made a handsome gift to her native city—nothing more or less than the entire Roger Williams farm of 104 acres, with the one condition that it should always be used as a public park for the people. She was as quaint and old-fashioned, herself, as the little red house where she lived; but her sympathies were broad and her heart in the right place. And by her benefaction will she ever be remembered by the city that grew up and flourished around her. The city of Providence accepted the gift and named the place Williams Park, which they point to now with justifiable pride; and they have spared no expense to make the spot all that a public park should be. Indeed there is perhaps no more beautiful park in the country, although there are larger ones, than the Roger Williams Park of Providence.

The city bought, among other things, a large collection of taxidermic specimens. The greenbeck, the German tamer about with all COMFORT readers will remember to have read in these columns last summer; and whose famous show on the Midway Plaisance will visitors to the World's Fair will have seen. The menagerie which they have formed contains some of the finest animals in captivity. A California man has recently donated a large number of rare birds, also; but the park lacked one thing which the children wanted, and that was an elephant. Children, you know, always consider an elephant the most important feature of a menagerie.

Now what did these Providence children do about it?

Well, instead of sitting by and wishing the city council would raise money enough to buy an elephant, they bought one themselves. That is, they started private subscriptions in all the schools and each child brought what he or she could afford. Some contributed a dime, some five cents, some a dime and some a dollar. And in an incredibly short time they were able to, and did, buy a young elephant from a Mr. Cole in Liverpool, England, and had it brought over to Providence. He is called Baby Roger, and is growing and flourishing finely; and all the children now take a proprietary interest in him, because they all paid something towards the $1,500, it took to buy him. So, though they may properly be said to have an elephant on their hands, they have got what they wanted, and are happy.

The fact that they did raise this purchase money, however, points a moral as well as adorns a tale. Only think how much the children of our country can accomplish, and what a mighty force they are when they once combine. In large cities, in States, and even in smaller towns they might unite and form a library, or raise a monument to some great and good public man. It is the old story of co-operation, which can work wonders. "A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether," children, and you can accomplish anything you undertake.

NELL'S MISTAKE.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT.

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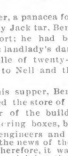

SORTY-FIVE minutes late."

Ben Pooshaw, the man who querulously uttered these words, was a fat, red-faced, middle-aged, locomotive engineer, who had entered the service of the W. Y. R. as fireman and, by his industry and good habits, was assigned to one of the most responsible runs in the service. Ben, in the main, was a jovial fellow but, having lost time on his run, did not feel in the best of humor.

He had, however, a panacea for all his ills.

Unlike the Jolly Jack tar, Ben did not have a wife in every port; he had become severely smitten with his landlady's daughter; a slender winsome belle of twenty-nine summers. He was engaged to Nell and the wedding-day was set.

After eating his supper, Ben sauntered up town, and entered the store of a village merchant. The rear of the building was partitioned off for stoving boxes, barrels, etc., and it was here that engineers and shopmen gathered to discuss the news of the day, and pass no idle hour. Therefore, it was not long before Ben began explaining the cause of delay to his train.

"You see," (one thing he did not see, and that was Nell as she entered the store to buy some molasses for the morning pan-cakes) "she commenced foaming and blowing; I didn't know what had got into her. Generally speaking, the old gal's all right, but of late, she's been acting quite cranky."

Nell pricked up her ears instantly and became a very attentive listener; for she readily recognized Ben's voice and thought she was the subject of his conversation.

"I tried my best to adjust her," Ben continued, "but she thumped and pounded and her lost motion, owing to about thirty years' service, didn't help matters any. Finally I got on my knees and commenced oiling her up some; thinking, you know, I'd humor her a little. When I got up I'll gosh darned if the rocker-arm wasn't broke."

"Wretch," exclaimed Nell under her breath, and almost stifling with rage; "who would believe that Ben Pooshaw would talk of me before a lot of men in this fashion? I know the rocker-arm broke one time when Ben was hugging me awful tight, but to think the fool would go and tell of it; I could scratch him."

Ben, unmindful of the bomb which was liable at any time, to be hurled at his unoffending head, went on: "Then the darned critter got on the dead centre and there I was. Well, says I, I'll fix you; so I got down and tried to pinch her along a little."

This was the last straw. In bounced Nell, her whole being but with emotion, and fairly screamed: "You pinched me, did you? you pinched me? you brute; take your ring, and only wish I had the worth of the paltry thing in pennies that I might fling them one by one at your head."

Having discharged this volley at the astonished Ben, she turned on her heel, swept out of the store and disappeared in the direction of her home.

It took poor Ben some little time to know just exactly "where he was at," and the rest of the night was devoted to "adjusting" matters with Nell. When she fairly understood the situation, she was overcome with remorse. She begged Ben to take her back and forget the past; which he manfully did, telling her that, in future, it was always better to be sure than sorry.

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A Lioness for Breakfast! A Zebra for Dinner!!

"A small herd of zebras were quietly feeding on a plain, all unconscious of the stealthy approach of several lions, which were creeping towards them in regular order, under cover of a dense reed thicket. So quietly did the lions make their advance that their progress was unnoticed even by the zebra-sentinel. The lions crept on, until they reached the thicket, when the sentinel took the alarm. It was too late—with a single bound, the leading lion sprang over the reeds, felled one of the zebras, and set the others scampering so as to fail an easy prey to his companions."

"Early one morning, one of our herdsmen announced that a lion was devouring a lioness, only her skull, the larger bones, and the skin were left. On examining the ground more closely, the fresh remains of a young springbok were also discovered. We therefore conjectured that the lion and lioness, being very hungry, and the antelope not proving a sufficient meal for both, had quarreled; and he, after killing his wife, had coolly eaten her also."

This is from page 136. Every one of the book's 800 illustrations is by an eminent artist, and the facts contained on every one of its 800 pages would be cheap at one dollar each, having cost more than a hundred times that sum.

A Giant Among Giants! 125 Feet Long!!

The huge Rorqual, strictly speaking the most wonderful of all books on page 523, roams the Arctic seas at will, being seldom molested by the hunters, and scarcely ever captured. The bulk of this animal is greater than that of any other whale, some specimens reaching a length of 125 feet. It is sometimes mistaken for the Greenland Whale and harpooned, but it is seldomed killed. On one occasion the Rorqual started off in a direct line and at such a speed that the men lost their presence of mind and forgot to cut the rope that connected the whale with the boat. Making directly for a neighboring ice-field, the Rorqual shot under it and drew the boat with all its crew beneath the ice, where they disappeared forever from the gaze of mankind.

On its 800 large, closely printed pages the book recounts hundreds and hundreds of thrilling adventures with and hair-breadth escapes from marine monsters and beasts of the forest of every kind and every land. Although several days and nights are required to read it through at one sitting, no one who once takes it up wishes to lay it down until it is finished. And all—young and old—want to refer to it again and again for knowledge and entertainment.

It is impossible to give in this announcement more than a slight idea of the magnitude of this great History, with its myriad pictures and accurate descriptions. It virtually goes into the haunts of all animals and shows them as they live.

Wood's Natural History is the recognized authority all over the world for accurate information regarding the habits, haunts, peculiarities, and diseases of the Animal Kingdom.

The work is a veritable treasure-house of valuable information, interestingly told, and replete with hundreds of accurate and artistic illustrations.

This mammoth Cyclopedia of the Animal World consists of over eight hundred pages and is substantially bound in stiff paper covers. Size of open book, 8 x 11 inches, and nearly 2 inches thick. It is in clear print on good paper, with five hundred excellent illustrations by special artists.

ed with 300 Engravings

ish eminent European s as WOLF, WEIR, TEES, COLEMAN, HAR- and others.

The picture of the attractive gentleman holding the above book is copied from this wonderful work, and is, according to Prof. Darwin, the likeness of one of your ancestors.

re you descended from a monkey? Whether or not you believe in the theory olution, you can doubtless select people from among your acquaintances would seem to you to be descended either from a monkey or that more le domestic animal popularly known as the mule. Before you decide this tion of heredity, however, you should read about the entire race in book, which is the best authority in the world on this subject. There are nd hundred varieties of monkeys, all as different from each other as the human is different from the South Sea Islander, or the citizen of New York the wild Hottentot. As Horace Greeley used to say, "This is mighty inter- g reading." There are stories both comical and pathetic of the remarkableligence of the monkey tribe. There are descriptions of bald-headed mon- long-haired monkeys, long-tailed monkeys, and no-tailed monkeys; monkeys t as a man and monkeys no bigger than a kitten. And there are hundreds hundreds of interesting and instructive tales of other animals besides mon-

So, whether or not your remote great-grandfather was a monkey, you ld not neglect this opportunity to decide for yourself.

Why pay out your money to take the whole family to the circus when you can a menagerie of the whole world's animals at home? Most large cities have Zoological Gardens where wild beasts may be seen, or their exhibitions of ed animals or winter circuses. In the summer the country is travelled over by agons which it costs a family several dollars to see. With this marvellous t every one can study the habits and look at the life-like pictures of all the ds in the world, at any time and at no expense. While as a guide to those visiting the Zoological Gardens or Circus it is invaluable. The countless anecdotes with which it contains will make merry many a long winter evening, and the hundreds of pages of thrilling adventures which those daring people who traverse mountain and morass, jungle and desert, to learn the habits of the animal kingdom undergo, will furnish true, heartfelt enjoyment to every member of the family—young and old.

Skeleton of Man. Skeleton of Gorilla.

As the book contains full descriptions of all domestic animals, also, with treatment and cures for their diseases, no farmer should be without it, and as the list embraces everything, from the giant to the giraffe, the hat to the beaf, the mouse to the mastodon, the coyote to the cuscus, no boy, no hunter, no student—in fact, nobody should neglect this greatest of all offers.

So thrilling and exciting are many of these adventures as to equal the wildest tales of the tropics, or the most blood-curdling ghost story; and yet they are all true, being the transcripts of personal experiences of noted travellers. Not only are they of sufficient importance to amuse and instruct the young, but they will absorb the attention and pass away many a dull hour for the old and worldy-worn reader; while every teacher in the land should provide herself or himself with the means of allaying that eager thirst for information which characterizes all young and restless minds. As a supplementary reader for schools, nothing could excel Wood's Natural History; because, in the first place, it will so absorb the attention of every scholar as to keep him interested in his work; and, in the second place, it is so instructive as to be well-nigh indispensable. And this is why every teacher and every scholar in the land should avail themselves of this unparalleled offer.

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Before the publication of this First American Edition the book has always sold in cloth for $6.00. It is therefore evident that our offer is one of exceptional value, and should be taken advantage of at once. You may not see such an offer again. There is only one edition like the above. It is published exclusively to be offered as a premium and cannot be had in the book-stores at any price. *It is printed on good paper, from clean, clear type*, and forms a library all by itself.

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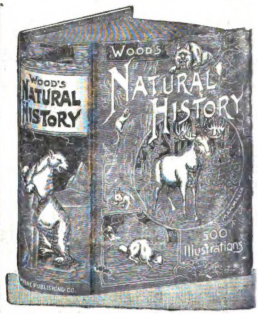

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THE BUSY BEES OF COMFORT.

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O many people no room, no corner of a room," writes Helen M. Wheeler of Boston, Mass., "is so attractive as that where the pile of books turn their backs on the visitors. It will disclose the secret of a deep window-seat or case that stands in my own sitting-room. The foundation was a shallow box-book, three feet long, with three boards nailed in at convenient distances for shelves, leaving room for the largest books at the bottom. Over this rough looking affair I tacked neatly a cover of the double-faced canton flannel, with the dark olive side out, letting the goods run below several inches from the edge on the inside of the case, and on the upper and lower sides of the shelves. All this secured with the tiniest tacks, I finished the edges with brass-headed furniture tacks and fastened across the front an inexpensive brass rod for my curtains, which were also of the canton flannel, the bright side showing as lining and turned up on the right side at the bottom in a border eight inches deep. With a cost of very little more than my time, I had a piece of furniture preferable to any one of cherry case of five times its cost, which I have used steadily for eight years without its showing any signs of fading or wearing out. I know also, of another after my model, covered with maroon felt, and trimmed with cut fringe of the felt on the edge of each shelf. Though many people have utilized the illustrations of papers and magazines for decorating their 'living-room,' few arrangements are as interesting as that of a young friend of mine, who has made the frieze around her room of centre pictures from 'Life,' by the celebrated illustrator Gibson, whose style she particularly admires. Her example might suggest a world of other collections, as varied as individual tastes. Another useful disposition of such pictures is to paste them over the holes which the best-meaning person in the world cannot avoid making in a Japanese screen, and the greater the damage, the more interesting will your screen prove to the callers who would never give a second glance to the regulation article with silken panels. Indeed you might make it from the beginning, by pasting manila wrapping paper over the common pine frame, and putting your pictures on that foundation. There is no end to the things that a deft-fingered woman can make, with a little practice with tools. For instance, a tea-table graces a friend's reception room, which no one suspects was the work of a girl. It is on the plan of the book-case illustrated in the July COMFORT. Four wooden rods to form foundations of the legs must be the right size to just fit inside a silk spool, and should be picked out by some experienced person who can tell when the wood is so seasoned as not warp. I recommend *silk* spools, because the indentation is so slight that, when glued together they produce an effect not unlike bamboo. Staining the spools as your rods and glue them until you have reached the distance from the floor at which you wish to place a shelf, generally eight inches. Any smooth board, one-half inch to one inch thick will answer for this, with a hole in each corner just large enough to let the rods through. The shelf will, of course, determine the size of your table, and you must have a board exactly like it for the top. Glue the shelf to the spools at which it rests, and continue to fasten on spools until you are ready for your table top. A very pretty finish is to let one spool stand far enough above the top to pass through a *twist* spool of the smallest size; the spool will fit even with the spool, sandpaper the whole quite smooth. Ebony stain was used with effect on the original of my description, but any other stain or enamel paint may be substituted.

"Perhaps some of the little girls like myself, with a desire to have their rooms at school or at home 'like other people' at small expense. Even the older ladies may not object to hearing, or scorn to try, the simple devices of the ingenuous contrivances with which the college girl can make stiff when at the end of her allowance or perhaps, with no other alliance than bright wits and nimble fingers. I have never seen or heard of any ideas like these in print, and as all have been used by myself or friends there is no question as to their practicability.

"In the first place a great bed is always an embarassing object in a small room where you receive company. If you have a cot there is no difficulty in transforming it into a Turkish couch by a plain drapery of any material, from art linen to silk, or, if you have a little extra time, by a more elaborate cover just fitting the cot with a generous frill reaching to the floor all around. For the latter purpose any muslin is too thin unless lined, which may be done with book-muslin, or any other cheap cotton goods. I knew a Scotch girl who rejoiced in a dark blue cover, woven with a pattern of purple thistles in white. But another equally effective couch was draped with the ever-serviceable 'blue denim,' with a deep border of scarlet-work in coarse white linen floss; while a pillow to match was decorated with a huge spider web and captive fly, and finished around the edge with a heavy white cotton cord or rope. Chenille portieres in soft blue and brown with light borders are popular among college girls, but the double-faced canton flannel, which comes in handsome patterns, olive on one side and paler colors on the other, is the most elegant and satisfactory thing to be obtained for a small price. Then pillows are as pillows in as cosy a fashion as possible and if you have no abundance of the regulation 'down' squares, you will find that a pillow cover just as picturesque and more substantial, if you will buttons them, filled one and all, into a pretty plain or ruffled cover of any fancy goods. For real comfort, the pillows must be too cold and slippery, though a small one in among the rest gives a pleasing fragrance to the atmosphere about the lounge. Even if you have to cope with a real bedstead, you can prevent it from being the most conspicuous object in the apartment by abstaining from these 'snowy draperies' so charming in a sleeping-room solely. Let your dark cover come over the foot-board and down to the floor. You can drape the head-board with a scarf or cover it with pictures stuck behind tightly drawn ribbons.

A desk is considered as necessary a piece of furniture in a college-girl's room as a bureau. To only a few did I confide that mine was an old-fashioned wash-stand, discovered in the attic, and begged from the owner with promises of great care for the precious heir-loom. It was of light varnished wood with dark trimmings, a shelf beneath which held a rack of books and my russia-leather writing desk, while the drawer was filled with stationery. Neither did I disclose that it was Half of an old red china silk sash which, tacked firmly to the right frame at the back (originally intended to hold a splasher,) furnished such a fine back-ground for half a dozen photographs, while the other half supplied a scarf for the top. The fringed ends draped at the same side made a fine bit of color, and harmonized with the decorations of my canopy, a waste-basket, which was nothing more than a clean peach-basket with red and pale green ribbons worn in and out through the slats. The tomes of the college girls have been determined at first sight by the red and green carpet, for which I was so responsible, but its cheery appearance in winter quite satisfied me with the predominance of red, which Helen Hunt' has so strongly recommended. I suppose everyone knows the possibility of transforming a trunk or shoe-box into a window-seat, by a cushioned cover, but few realize the convenience in limited quarters of having one enough to slide under the bed and covered to keep out the dust. Some of the college girls use them for 'preserve closets,' but they are useful for anything, from hats or gowns to shoes—if you haven't a big cretonne or (ticking shoe-pocket on the inside of your closet door, like mine, which has six small pockets, and a big one at the top where I stow my unmended stockings."

While we are talking about what may be done with old boxes, let us listen to what this Bee has to say about cretonne:

"If it is new ideas concerning articles of solid comfort that the busy Bees wish to hear, I think I can describe something they will see to be useful as well as ornamental. It fell to our lot once to furnish a room that had no closet or closet; so we found it quite necessary to invent some thing to take the place of those that we cannot find a place elsewhere in a room, no matter how large. Well, I, being the mother of invention, I turned my attention to this, and soon had an idea. I went to a furniture store and bought a second-hand two-story safe. It was dirty and shabby, and a little in low the centre, by two small drawers. The top part I used for dishes and the lower part as a cupboard, both being furnished with shelves, and having doors. This cost me about $4.00. Then I bought a brass rod and rings at 35 cents. Two and one-half yards silkoline at ten cents per yard, two cans of black enamel paint at 25 cents per can and a brush for 15 cents. I took the top doors off, hinges and all, and applied my paint to the safe, giving it two coats over all except the back, which needed none, and the panels in the lower doors. While this was drying, (and it took only a few minutes) I made two curtains of the silkoline, but took care to put them up traced lines of gold across the small drawers and over the top of upper portion of safe. This added quite a good deal to its appearance. Then I got out my box of oil colors and decorated the panels in the lower doors. On one I painted a milk-maid coming across a meadow with a brown jug, and on the other a group of baby chickens in the grass reaching for a worm. I put a few extra touches on my work for I was long-sighted and knew that we would want it in one case or the other in our own home and would probably be short of funds about that time; and when we moved into our own home and could afford to use it as a wardrobe and general catch-all, we stood it in the hall and filled its shelves with books, while the lower part was exactly the place for magazines, pamphlets, etc. Many an admiring glance was cast upon my book-case that it could not have merited had it been a cheap bought article.

"Another convenient article to have in a bedroom is a sofa cushion and lounge pillow. Get a box about two feet square and have a stout cover fastened on the top to hold small fringes. Line the box with calico or good thick paper. Cover the outside with chintz, cretonne or burlap ruffled with white, tacking it smoothly on with brass tacks. Before covering the lid, pad it, using three or four thicknesses of an old comforter or an old pillow or cushion. Over this fasten the cretonne finishing the edges with a fringe if desired, and the brass tacks.

A WASH-STAND DESK.

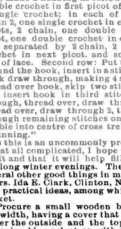
LAUNDRY BOX.

Inside the cover tack a large pocket of the cretonne, to be used for small articles of ribbons, bandkerchiefs, laces, etc. This is an inexpensive as well as convenient and useful 'comfort.'"

MRS. CARRIE BRADLEY,
Little Rock, Ark.

Some of the Bees having sent in requests for crochet patterns, I am glad to offer this rose lace, furnished by Mrs. A. A. Kennelly, Houston, Texas.

"The lace is made of rosettes and joined together as you make them, filling the interstices with stars. For each rosette make a foundation of 6 chain and close with slip stitch. First round: five chain, work 7 double crochet, separated by 2 chains around the loop, and slip stitch at third stitch of 5 chain. Second round: a single crochet on every stitch in last round and slip stitch in first single crochet. Third round: ten chain, one double crochet on every third stitch separated by 7 chain; then 7 chain, slip stitch in third 7 in chain of last beginning. Fourth round: around every 7 chain work one single crochet, 4 chain, 2 single crochet, 4 chain, 2 single crochet, which forms a picot. This completes one rosette. Work the rest in the same manner, connecting as seen in design. For the



CROCHETED ROSE LACE.

stars in the interstices make 7 chain, join with 1 single crochet, in each with slip stitch in one of the picots; in the space made by joining 4 rosettes, chain 3, one single crochet in loop, chain 3, slip a stitch in each where the picots of two rosettes are joined, chain 3, single crochet in loop and so on until you have 8 points; close with slip stitch on first single crochet. Having joined rosettes enough for the lace, make a heading as follows. 1st row. One double crochet in first picot of rosette, 2 chain, 1 single crochet in each of the next picots chain 2, one single crochet in each of the next 3 picots, 2 chain, one double crochet in next picot, one double crochet in each 3 points of star separated by 2 chain, 2 chain, 1 double crochet in next picot, and so continue until end of lace. Second row: Put the thread twice around the hook, insert in a stitch; thread over hook draw through, making 4 stitches on hook; thread over hook, skip two stitches of foundation insert hook in third stitch; draw thread through, thread over, draw through 2 stitches, thread over, draw through 2, thread over draw through remaining stitches on hook, chain 3, 1 double crochet, 1 triple; repeat from beginning."

As this is an uncommonly pretty pattern, and not at all complicated, I hope many of you will try it and like it. It will help fill up, pleasantly, the long winter evenings. There are, however, several other good things in my work-basket.

Mrs. Ida E. Clark, Clinton, Ill., sends several practical ideas, among which is a clippings basket.

"Procure a small wooden box, length twice the width, height half and half as much beyond. Cover the outside and the top of the cover by fastening blue velvet on with mucilage. Divide the inside of the box into two equal parts by fitting in tightly pieces of wood the height of the box. These sections are covered with blue silk. Line the box and cover with blue silk; paint or embroider a pretty design for the top with the inscription 'Gems from many minds' or something pleasing to the fancy. This is a pretty ornament as well as practical place for clippings from newspapers, poetry and other articles one desires to preserve. A slipper case for a gentleman may be made thus: Cut two soles and two uppers in the shape of a slipper, about two feet long and one foot wide, with high heel, high in front and square back. Line the uppers with silk or satin. Place the inner side of one of the pieces sew two pockets of unique patterns at the top, one on the bottom and back of the slipper, bending in the back to make the heel. Fasten the uppers into the toe, and cover the whole with black velvet, sewing the edges with yellow or old gold silk or embroidery stitch. Paint or embroider a row of bachelor's buttons down the front, and on the sides a spray of forget-me-not. Sew these words beneath: 'Not found here.' The words should be in gold."

I wonder who can send me the most original thing to be used as a birthday present for my friend Something practically pretty and plainly understood?

Bee says you read the new department this month—COMFORT'S Palmistry Club. You will find it both unique and interesting. I expect the Bees will do their share of buzzing over it, and will all want to join.

BUSY BEE.

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THERE is one remedy you can try without danger of harming you. It is H. G. Colman, Chemist, Kalamazoo, Mich., for a trial package free of charge. He says the success of this advertising is by giving it away! Postage 4 cents. Judge for yourself. Mention this paper.

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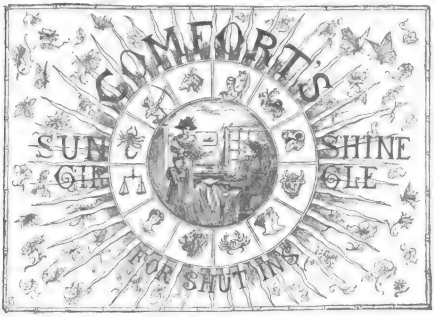

Every Shut-In who will get up a club of five or more yearly subscribers for COMFORT at twenty-five cents apiece, may send us ten cents for each subscriber, and keep the other fifteen for herself.

The only condition given is that you must furnish satisfactory proof that you are a Shut-In. Get your physician and clergyman, or two other responsible persons, to sign a statement saying they have known you (and how long), that you are an invalid, unable to work, and that you properly belong to the Shut-In Circle.

No club will be received of less than five subscribers, and these must all be sent at one time, together with the amount necessary for the club.

Money may be sent by money-order, postal-note, check, draft, registered-letter, or in postage stamps. Never send money loose in a letter.

Try among your friends, neighbors and relatives. Your children at school or in factories, or your servant-girls among their friends can bring you name of new subscribers. Take it as seriously, as a matter of business, and you will succeed.

All correspondence for this department should be directed to Sunshine Circle, care of COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

DEAR FRIENDS:

I wish you all a Happy New Year. Do you ask how I can much you with such a wish when you are, perhaps, hopelessly ill, a chronic sufferer, old, poor, afflicted? I answer in the words of the great apostle, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Mark you, he does not say content comes easy to him, he says, "I have learned"; he does not say content if he can have certain things as he wants them, but "in whatsoever state I am." Happiness does not depend on outward circumstances, it comes from within. The pauper may be happier than the king; the bedridden invalid happier than the woman of society; therefore I repeat to you my earnest wish that you may learn, if you have not learned it already, the beautiful lesson of CONTENT, which alone can bring you happiness in the year we have just begun.

There is nothing that so wears upon us as a constant rebellion against our lot in life. It does no good, and only makes us more miserable. An old hymn expresses it in these lines:

"What can these anxious cares avail,
These never ceasing moans and sighs;
What can it help us to bewail
Each painful moment as it flies?
Our cross and trials do but press
The heavier for our murmurings.
Only thy restless heart keep still,
And wait in cheerful hope content
To take whate'er His gracious will,
His all-discerning love hath sent.
Doubt not our lot is best, we are known
To Him who chose us for His own."

We all know how true it is that if we allow ourselves to brood over any real or imaginary grievance, or unkind word, it seems to grow bigger and bigger, until all last it shuts out all the sunshine we might otherwise be enjoying.

The two greatest enemies to our happiness are discontent and ill-temper, and the two usually go together. There is nothing equal to them for destroying the happiness of a family, and the worst of it is they are so very ill that they conquer their victim before he realizes what they are about. Temper makes its appearance in various forms. It may be a short, sharp, snappish way of speaking; it may be a sullen, silent demon that lurks in us; it may be a whining, grumbling, complaining temper; but whatever form it takes, look out for it, for you cannot be truly loved or respected, and your presence will never be a desirable one in any family, until you have conquered it.

A child cannot keep its love and respect for an irritable, peevish parent; a cross child is a serious trial even to a fond mother; and very few people are willing to take care of a faultfinding, gloomy invalid, although that invalid may be a near relative. I know of one such case (I am thankful to say she is not a member of our "Sunshine Circle"); none of her relatives were willing to take her into their families when she was left without a home, so they boarded her among strangers. Different people tried to keep her and gave it up; then she was sent to the Old Lady's Home. There she had a pleasant room all to herself and every comfort, but she soon began her complaining again and the matron refused to keep her. Now I have lost trace of her, but no doubt she is trying someone's patience severely—yet, the woman has been for years a professing Christian. Dear members of the "Sunshine Circle" try to keep sunshine in your hearts, and avoid complaining, ingratitude and ill-temper as you would a deadly poison.

One Shut-In writes, "I wish I could do something for my kind parents and brothers and sisters who do so much for me."

You can do much for them, dear sister, helpless though you are. Make your room the brightest, most cheerful spot in the house—a haven of rest and peace for the tired, worried, busy members of your family. Do not greet them with complaints about yourself, but be ready to listen and to sympathize with their loys and griefs, and you will be surprised to find, after they get used to it, how much they will look for and appreciate your coming. If you are able to do any little things for them like sewing on a button, or mending a rent, or knitting a pair of mittens, or making holders and pincushions, or crocheting a lace for a new dress do all you can to help yourself and others—don't give up any more than you can possibly help. Lizzie Leech tells us of cheerful words and smiles, go a long way to create happiness.

A poor mother writes a sad story of her sufferings, and says her greatest trial is that she can do nothing for her young children.

It is, indeed, very sad to be prevented from active ministering to them, but do not feel that you are useless. I once knew a mother, bedridden for twenty long years, very poor besides, and yet she made a home for her two daughters, and through her great love and patience she brought them up under the most difficult and adverse circumstances to be useful, good women. When I visited this family living in a poor part of the city, in two little rooms, and saw that patient sufferer, I went away strengthened, and uplifted myself. I could tell you of another invalid mother, but she was so near, so dear, I can hardly yet bear to speak of her. I never saw her well, I cared for her myself all the time through long weeks of suffering, yet never did I hear one impatient word, one complaint. She spoke always of her great patience, her childlike trust, the best sermon that could be preached; and now their children arise up and call her blessed," and her memory is to us a priceless heritage.

Another Shut-In writes that she wishes to adorn her room and make it beautiful.

This is a praiseworthy wish, and there are many simple inexpensive ways of doing so. Plants add much to the cheerfulness of any room, and it is an easy matter to keep a few in good condition. One of the best ways is to have a shallow wooden box fitted to be window-seat, or to a table or stand. Line the box with zinc if you can, then cover the bottom about two inches deep with clean, white sand which should be kept damp enough to evaporate moisture, and set the pots on the sand.

Always water plants in the morning, and water thoroughly, then go no water on between times. Give them a good showering once a week, if possible, to keep the leaves clean, as plants and trees breathe through their leaves. Geraniums give the most satisfaction, and there are so many varieties one may have a fine show of them, but petunias, fuschias, pinks, begonias, calla, arbutilon and ivy are pretty. I had a south window completely filled one winter with the latter, only one plant of each, but so large that they made a very fine show and blossomed most satisfactorily.

The most easily cultivated hanging plants are oxalis, money, and Joseph's coat or Wandering Jew. The latter grows rapidly now and lasts a long time. I have at least half a dozen varieties, the green, striped, pink and the green, drooping sprays hanging down all around the vases are most graceful and cheering to my eyes. Fill a vase, or just fill wide-mouthed bottles, and tied the bottles behind some pictures in your sitting-room so that the long sprays trailed over the picture frames, and it was quite a novelty, I can say. It will grow in water all winter, but towards the spring it looks rather spindling, and can then be transferred to the pots.

The German ivy is a delightful climber. I have seen a complete bower made over a window with one or two of these plants. I have also seen the Madeira vine flourish and blossom on a shingle opposite a south window, against the wall. The English ivy grows well in the shade, but is rather slow about it. Palms, ferns, and the rubber plant get on without much care. If you have a few plants and can take good care of them than to have more than you can manage easily. Plants need considerable care and attention, but they repay us for all we give them.

If our friend who wishes to adorn her room can knit or sew she can make a good many simple, yet pretty additions to it. An afghan to throw over the sofa, or couch; a wall pocket to hang beside the bed with several pockets to hold books, hair brush, or combs; two or three soft, light pillows with a covering buttoned on of pretty cretonne, satine or denim, to slip under her back or head; fancy pincushions of various shapes and styles to hang up here and there; a bedroom slipper or bedroom cape; all these things add much to the cozy, cheerful appearance of an invalid's room. But, with all these, remember there is no ornament like that of a "meek and quiet spirit," and floods of sunshine cannot make a room cheerful if it lacks the sunshine of a cheerful face.

Dear friends, cultivate happiness. Be as pleased, and cheerful, and happy over every little bright incident that comes into your daily life as you would be if some people cultivate sorrow, and act as if they were afraid to smile. Smile all you can; try to smile in the midst of pain; smile away your blue feelings; and by constant effort smiles will come more natural than frowns or groans. And this will help more than anything else to give you a Happy New Year.

SISTER MARGARET.

NOTE.—We are constantly receiving letters from Shut-Ins, that are practically requests for free advertising, which are entirely impracticable for many reasons. As COMFORT is regularly read by six million people, it is impossible to give to a few, privileges which might be claimed with equal right, by all. This is not a business department of the paper; it is intended to be exactly what its name implies—"Sunshine for Shut-Ins."—EDITOR.

The richest man in South Africa is Barney Barnoto, who, only a few years ago, was a dealer in second-hand clothing in London. His wealth is estimated at $100,000,000, and he is part owner in every railroad, mine, tramway and big building enterprise in Cape Colony.

Be sure and use that old and well-tried remedy, MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP for children teething. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays pain, cures wind colic and is the best.

To relieve burning feet, take one pint of bran and one ounce of bi-carbonate of soda. Put in a foot bath and add one gallon of hot water. When cool enough, soak your feet in this mixture fifteen minutes.

ST. VITUS DANCE. One bottle Dr. M. M. Fenner's Specific always cures. Circular with cures. Fredonia, N.Y.

The white of an egg, beaten with the juice of one lemon and sweetened, is excellent for a hoarse cold.

GOOD NEWS FOR ASTHMATICS.

We observe that the Kola plant, found on the Congo river, West Africa, is now in reach of sufferers from Asthma. As before announced, this new discovery is a positive cure for Asthma. You can make trial of the Kola Compound free, by addressing a postal card to the Kola Importing Co., 1164 Broadway, New York, who are sending out large trial cases free by mail, to sufferers.

RODS and Dip-Needles for Prospectors, Miners and Treasure-Seekers. Prospectors and Miner's Agency, Bachmanville, Pa.

AGENTS clear $100 monthly. 100 Best 25c Ladies' Specialties, for old and young. 84 page Illust'd Catalogue FREE. G. L. Ervin & Co., Chicago, Ill.

LADY PILES Instant relief, final cure in 3 to 6 days, and never returns. No salve, no suppository. One application. Remedy mailed Free. Address P. R. HERMAN, Box 2064, New York City, N.Y.

YOUR NAME On 25 Lovely Cards Chromo, Motto, Scroll, Monogram and Comic Fringe Cards, Name on 10c. Sent Postpaid. 25 Samples 10c. OUTFIT FOR ALL AGES. CLIFF CARD CO., NORTH HAVEN, CONN.

10 CENTS Silver, pays for our handsome 25c. Pearl and Jet Jewelry Set, 1 year's subscription to our 32 page STORY PAPER, which goes with the set by mail FREE, sample 10c. Agents wanted. Big pay. Catalogue free. Pearl Jewelry Co., Box 1, Augusta, Maine.

T. D. CAMPBELL, X 165 Boylston, Ind.

A PRESENT. SEND us your address and we will make you a present of a beautiful WASHING MACHINE in the World. No wash-board or rubbing. We want to introduce it in your locality and or act as agent for us. Address COIN MONEY. We also give a HANDSOME WATCH FREE to first comer in each county. Address Rose & Co., 7 LAUNDRY Street, Jersey Shore, N.Y.

DRUNKENNESS

FREE RECIPE FOR THE SURE AND SECRET CURE OF THE ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO CURSE. Tasteless, Harmless and Certain. Prescription sent FREE to wives or friends of inebriates, or Tobacco users. A marvelous success in even advanced cases. Inclose stamp. Can be given secretly in coffee, etc. Dr. HIRAM COOK, 21 Park Row, New York.

FAUTH'S GERMAN PILLS. An absolute cure for all weaknesses. Sent by mail, sealed, for $1. Pamphlet Free. Agents wanted. Address OLIVER REMEDY CO., Box 572, C. Washington, D. C.

RETURN this notice, with name and address and 10 cents, prepaid, and receive a beautiful Gold Plated Ring, Elgin style, stem wind and set. Watch which you can use for 60 days if you like it, pay Express agent $3.50 and keep it; otherwise it will be returned at our expense. We only ask your promise to go to Expressage office and examine watch. Very latest and Neatest Novelty ever offered. Write your name, Express office and P. O. address. State size wanted. Ladies or Gentlemen. When you send Cash, Money order or Stamps we give a Gold plated Chain. No risk with C.O.D. form. Cash after it and pay C.O.D. balance. Write to-day. Mention this paper. Address National Watch Co., 189 Fulton St., N.Y.

GOLD FILLED 25c

Agents Wanted. Sample Outfit 25c. Sell 6 Watches in a day. Profits $5 to $10 daily. Sample Watch and Outfit sent on receipt of 25c. Sell one another 25c watch. Trade the other 5 hours for $4 to $5. Yours truly, Sarah Kirkham. Hundreds such testimonials. Agents are making money.

KIRTLAND BROS. & CO., 88 Fulton St., N.Y.

CORNUCOPIA OF MUSIC. 218 VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL PIECES

This is a collection of English, Irish, Scotch and American Songs and Ballads, *all with piano (or organ) accompaniment*, arranged in Quadrilles, Marches, Also, Contra Dances, Reels, Jigs and Hornpipes; English, French, German, Polish and Spanish Dances; Galops, Polkas, Schottisches, Waltzes, Marches, Quicksteps, Gavottes, etc. It contains the latest and most popular songs of the day, viola solos, piano and violin duets, etc., the whole forming a Musical Library in itself. Where else can as large a selection be had for the price?

Consists of 128 pages, printed from full-sized music plates, including all of the following:

Anne Laurie, Auld Lang Syne, Bonnie Prince Charlie, Bonnie Dundee, Boulanger, Le Cupid and Love, Comrades, Chorus Jig, Cuckoo, Chimney Dance, Devil's Dream, Dissipation, Fairy Dance, Fyne Lassie Dwelling, German, The Go to the Devil, German Mix, Highland Fling, Hull's Victory, I've Wandered Yonder, Imperial Polka, Irish Tune, Keel Row, Reel Of Tullochgorum, Light Artillery Quick Step, Money Musk, Maid of Argyle, My Pretty Pearl, Newport Waltz, Old Hundred, Old Rock of Ages, Open Reel, Out Out Jig, Oyster River Schottisch, Portland Fancy, Perpetuity, Flegel's Hymn, Pleyel's Hymn, Robin Ruff, Rock of Ages, Rosebud Reel, Rory O'More, Rocket Galop, Rosalie, Rustic Reel, Russian March, Sicilian, Six Hand Reel, Skirt Dance, Soldier's Joy, Spanish Dance, Speed Old Cow, Shells of Ocean, Silent Night, Scottish Dance, Spanish Waltz, Tempest, Virginia Reel, That is Love, Tempest, Up the Hills Away, Wee Cooper of Fife, White Cockade, Sweet Home, Old Oaken Bucket, Home Sweet Home, Sun of my Soul, Ye Banks and Braes, Ye Mariners All, Spirit of French Revolution, Bride's Reel, Uncle Sam's Fancy, Ladies' Fancy, Alloa, Alloa, shore Dance, Blue Bells of Scotland, Bell's Cantata, Baker of Lorern, A Scottish Lad, Bravo of Venice, Chinese March, Chinese March, Cockney Hornpipe, Crookken Lawn Hornpipe, Dance of Bells, Dance of Bells, Dance of Bells

$1,200 for a Cancelled Postage Stamp.

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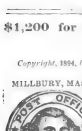
MILLBURY, MASS.



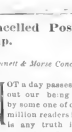
THE RAREST AMERICAN STAMP, WORTH $1200.00.

NOT a day passes without our being asked by some one of our five hundred readers if there is any truth in the various stories afloat as to the uses to which cancelled stamps are put, and whether the government will pay a certain price for a million of its stamps, or that a bed in a hospital will be endowed in the name of the donor of a similar quantity. There is absolutely no truth in these interesting stories; but, at the same time, cancelled stamps have a value and are made to serve many a useful and charitable purpose.

The cutting of stamps in quantity is carried on to a great extent, by almost all branches of the King's Daughters and the Shut-In Society, and millions upon millions are sold every year, the proceeds of which go almost exclusively for the charities of these various organizations.

So vast has the business of collecting, exchanging and disposing of stamps become, that firms in the large cities all over the world do nothing else but buy and sell stamps; and millions of dollars annually change hands in this novel branch of trade. It is said that one concern in New York City, does over half a million dollars of business every year in cancelled postage stamps.

There are still thousands and thousands of houses in this country where the garrets contain a source of wealth, hidden among the correspondence of our fathers and grandfathers, back in the forties and fifties. At that time envelopes were unknown and the sheets of paper, on which the letters were written, were simply folded and sealed and then the postage stamp attached. Thus, if the letters have been preserved, the stamps also have been preserved and some of these little pieces of paper, used in 1841, 1845, and 1846, are worth as much as $100.00. Again, the Brattleboro, Vt., stamp is worth $500.00, and that, rare American stamp, the Millbury, is worth $1200 00. Many a family has been made happy and preserved from want by a hunt among the old family papers and many further rich "finds" are there within easy grasp. It may seem strange, however, to suppose that all old stamps are valuable, as some of the very oldest are almost as common as the stamps of the present day. Age never determines the price, as this depends entirely upon the scarcity.



ONE OF THE RAREST AMERICAN STAMPS, WORTH $500.00

Another fruitful source of search are the business houses and houses in the South where the letters received during the existence of the Confederacy are treasured and stored

In the early days of the Confederacy the postal service was not very highly developed and it took almost a year before that government could furnish its postmasters with stamps for the prepayment of correspondence. However, the use of stamps had become so universal, that it was almost impossible to carry on the service by the old-fashioned methods, and many postmasters decided to print stamps of their own and sell them to the patrons of their offices. Thus resulted the stamps of the various cities of the Confederacy. As far as known the postmasters of the following cities adopted this temporary expedient: Athens, Ga.; Baton Rouge, La.; Charleston, S. C.; Columbia, S. C.; Columbus, Ga.; Fredericksburg, Va.; Goliad, Tex.; Greenville, Ala.; Kingston, Tenn.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Lenoir, N. C.; Livingston, Ala.; Lynchburg, Va.; Macon, Ga.; Marion, Ala.; Marion, Va.; Memphis, Tenn.; Milledgeville, Ga.; Mobile, Ala.; Nashville, Tenn.; New Orleans, La.; Petersburg, Va.; Pittsylvania C H., Va.; Pleasant Shade, Va.; Rheatown, Tenn.; Ringgold, Ga.; Salem, N. C.; Spartansburg, S. C.; Tellico Plains, Tenn.; Tuscumbia, Ala.; Victoria, Texas.

CONFEDERATE STAMP.

Some of these stamps are worth as much as $50.00 for a single specimen and the very commonest one of them is worth at least 50c.

There may have been other cities which had stamps of their own, but so far no specimens have been discovered. All were used in 1861 and 1862 form very interesting relics of that troubled period of our national existence.

Another question frequently asked by our readers is, what becomes of all these stamps? Some claim that wells are papered with them; others believe that paper mache is made of them The latter idea is absurd as any kind of stamps are worth more money than their weight as paper mache, to say nothing of the labor of converting them into that material.

A CONFEDERATE STAMP OF VIRGINIA.

It may occasionally occur that an odd fancy prompts the papering of a wall with postage stamps, but instances of this are rare and would cost only an infinitesimal fraction of the quantity of stamps collected annually.

Almost all the stamps collected find their way into the collections of philatelists the name by which a stamp collector is known. It would be impossible to form any idea of the number of collections in the world or of the number added each year, but they amount to many millions. There is no section of the globe in which there are no stamp collectors, and wherever civilization leads the way, the stamp albums follows.

It is human nature to collect something, and as stamps are easy to obtain in limited quantities, and the information in regard to the subject is very accurate, this phase of the collecting mania has become one of the most widespread and popular.

It is a great education also. The invalid confined to her room and shut away from everything, may travel all over the world by learning to read and understand the stamps of different nationalities. The student of history finds volumes of information in the stamps of different decades; and the child learns many things about geography when he begins to learn to tell at a glance the nationality of a foreign stamp, and the pictured face thereon. A stamp album ought to be included in the possessions of every child, and young person; nothing better can be suggested for a Christmas or birthday present. A school teacher will find stamp-collecting useful in many ways, and if she can arouse an enthusiasm among her pupils on the subject, they will all be benefitted. Let the children understand how to solve all these questions when they see a foreign stamp:

A RARE CONFEDERATE STAMP.

What country issued this stamp?

Whose head is on it?

When was it issued?

What do the letters in the corner mean?

What does the H. M. S. signify?

When did the ruler whose head is pictured ascend the throne or the chair of state?

What is its coat of arms?

When were stamps first issued?

Who was the originator of them?

And as many more as you can think of.

Again, how many know that the stamps of our own country are much handsomer than any others, and that the United States is called upon to print stamps for foreign countries?

Those who are collecting stamps, either for pleasure or profit, or both, should have a proper place to keep them, and all such should secure a copy of the Philatelist's Album for American and foreign stamps, which has already reached its tenth edition, and which has representations of all kinds of stamps with their valuations, currencies and something of their histories. By special arrangement with the publishers, COMFORT is enabled to send a copy free to every reader who will send two new yearly subscribers with their orders for stamps. Such an offer as this has never before been made, and it is not likely that it will be again, as the edition is nearly exhausted. Parents should see that their children are properly supplied and their teachers selects a more useful or appropriate gift for their pupils, as it affords many pleasant and profitable hours for old and young.

We shall have another article prepared before many months, giving many interesting facts about foreign stamps—what they are worth—what they signify—and what may be learned from them. Meanwhile we hope that all the readers who have written us, or have been tempted to write regarding this stamp-craze, will have found much valuable and useful information in this article.

CONFEDERATE, TENNESSEE.

We are indebted to the Scott Stamp & Coin Agency of New York City, for facts contained in the above article.—ED.

A NICE STAMP ALBUM FREE.

As you will notice in preceding column, we offer a fine, good sized Stamp Album, bound in heavy stiff covers, Free, as a premium for only two yearly subscribers to "Comfort" at 35c. each. This Philatelist's Album is arranged to contain about three thousand different stamps and is sold for 25c. If you do not care to get up a club. Address, COMFORT, Augusta, Maine

FREE. SOLID GOLD WATCHES, CHAINS, RINGS, etc., to any one selling our Goods. Consisting rolled gold Hunting Watch, Chain, enameled French dress scarf or stick Pin, GOLD BUTTONS, and our large catalogue with other premiums you can make $5.00 per day. This offer is made to secure Agents. W. KNOBLOCH, 209 E. 85th St., N. Y.

PIANO FREE

An elegant highly finished UPRIGHT PIANO will be given to each of the first 100 persons who answer this advertisement. Address Cohow & Co. 1 Piano free, write quick, this may make sales. If you want U. S. PIANO MFG CO., 9 Murray St., N. Y.

$3 PAID per 1000 for DISTRIBUTING CIRCULARS. MALENA CO., WARREN'S MARLB.

TURKISH HAIR ELIXIR

Grows a Beard, Mustache, Eyebrows, Eyelashes, Hair, Whiskers, Luxuriant Hair on Bald Heads in one month. Guaranteed A preparation that may be relied on, and every pkg. a sold pkg. guarantee. Prepd 50 cts. ready for use, 2 for $1. Sent sealed. TREMONT MFG. CO., Sta. A, Boston, Mass.

FREE

Each person answering this advertisement can get a handsome stamp album, the most cheap and practical album ever solicited. Free. This is no gaudy trifle, but a valuable for everyone. We cash show proof and testimonials $1,200 watches to be given away in this season; we are determined to sell every watch. Sample Watch in the 60 days to 60,000 new subscribers. Send 10 cents for sample copy Home Weekly one of the most illustrated and popular family papers published. The illustrated Weekly Home is a large 16 page paper, fully illustrated every week, contains elegant engravings of fashions, humorous sketches, stories, etc. In a welcome visitor to every home. Send for paper on trial. It is bright, cheerful and instructive. Its offers are unrivalled. Send 10 cents to-day and we will send you regularly every week for the months copy of our Home Weekly and send you our handsome watches FREE as soon as your subscription is received. Send at once. ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY, NEW YORK CITY, P. O. BOX 2628.

RUPTURE CURED FREE! One person in each place. You do a few trifling things for us at home during your spare time. We have already cured many thousands. Send stamp (if convenient). SUREHOLD CO., Box C, No. Windham, Maine.

118 Grand Articles FREE!

For only 12 cents to pay for our beautiful 16-page magazine for three months the will send, all absolutely free, Fine Rolled Gold Ring, Pearl Top Ladies' Pin, Gent's Scarf Pin, Rolled Gold Pin, Ladies' Fancy Pin, Gent's Sleeve Pin, Sheets Note Paper and 100 Beautifully Colored Pictures, all different. We send FREE as per above, if you write at once, or 10 cents for sample copy. HOME CYCLE PUBLISHING CO., P. O. Box 2628, New York City.

THE STANDARD GEM ROLLER ORGAN, IS THE WONDER OF THE AGE.

PLAYS OVER 600 PIECES. 80 SIMPLE a CHILD CAN PLAY IT.

Our Gem Roller Organ now stands unparalleled in the history of Automatic musical instruments. It is as near the ideal of a perfect home instrument as it is possible to make it. Requiring no knowledge of music, any one can play the most elaborate and beautiful pieces, such as Sacred Music, Waltzes, Schottische, Polkas, Quadrille, Jiggs, Marches, Reels, Hymns, Sacred Music, Christmas Carols,

Cats with Aunt Minerva and her Owls.

EDITOR'S NOTE. The following rules govern the publication of matter in this department.

Contributors must without exception be regular subscribers to Comfort, and every contribution must be in the writer's own name and post office address in full.

Original letters only, which deal with matters of general interest will be published. They must be as brief, plain and correct as the writers can make them and may vary in length from one hundred to four hundred words. Only letters of exceptional merit and interest may reach 450. Contributors must write on one side of their paper only.

Every month a number of prize monograms composed of the writer's initials, will be awarded to those making the best contributions. These monograms, which will be most desirable ornaments for albums, cards, etc., will be printed in connection with the respective letters, and new electotypes of same will be mailed, paid, to the prize winners.

$10 CASH PRIZES $10

In addition to the foregoing, the following cash prizes will be paid monthly:

1st.	For the best original letter	$3.00
2nd.	" second best original letter	2.00
3rd.	" third "	1.50
4th.	" fourth "	1.00
5th.	" fifth "	1.00

Competitors for these monthly cash prizes must *remain on all the above lists* for three months before being at least one new Cousin into the COMFORT circle; that is, they must send one new subscriber with each letter, together with 25 cents for a yearly subscription.

These cash prizes will be announced monthly in this department.

No premiums will be given for subscriptions sent in to the Editor's office.

All communications must be addressed to Aunt Minerva, care of COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

CASH PRIZE WINNERS FOR JANUARY.

Annie Chase Toddie,	$3.00
Edith Williams,	2.50
J. B. Deane,	2.00
Mrs. N. Pettison,	1.50
Kate Pope,	1.00

MONOGRAM-WINNERS FOR JANUARY.

Leonora Werthmiller, Kate Pope,
J. B. Deane, Edith Williams,
George W. Morris, Leo W. Shepherd,
W. H. Bodell.

THESE owls of ours are keeping guard over so many interesting letters that you will want to hear from, that I am not going to take up any more space this time than I can help. The first cousin to be heard from wears a familiar face and has something interesting to tell us about Mammoth Cave.

"The cave is located in Edmondson County, and is a combination of grottoes and sink-holes, having of the former about four thousand and of the latter about six hundred. It was discovered by a man named Hutchins, while in pursuit of a wounded bear, and originally purchased for forty dollars, but is now valued at three hundred thousand. The entrance, after our arrival, we entered a large ravine, and, after approached the cave we beheld a dreadfully natural arch at the mouth. It has a span of seventy feet and from the ledge above, a cascade leaps fifty feet to the rocks below, where it disappears. We went down a flight of steps leading to a long narrow passage. Our guide informed us that the air was rarer, instead of rushing out as it does in summer, rushes steadily inward. This is caused by the difference in temperature, there being no perceptible motion of air when the temperature inside and outside of the cave is equal. The temperature of the cave is always 54 degrees Fahr, and is of singular purity. The main cave is forty to three hundred feet wide and from thirty-five to one hundred twenty-five feet high. It has several vast rooms. The dead ivy which is called the Rotunda is the cave are the ruins of the old saltpetre works. After viewing, we passed on to the Bottomless Pit, by stairs. Such is the striking resemblance to a beautiful starry night, that, were one suddenly and unprepared taken under this subterranean mock sky, they would imagine themselves actually standing in the open night! This optical illusion is caused by a profusion of white spots through a strata of black oxide of manganese. Audubon's Avenue, I was told, is seldom visited. There is just one thing worth noting about this and that is the immense number of bats hang from the crevices like swarms of bees, which made me get out quicker than I went in. About one mile from the entrance we came to a huge rock, fifty-seven feet long, resembling a coffin. It is called 'Giant's Coffin' and is of pure white stone. It was a weird scene, wild and picturesque, and I confess I felt an involuntary shudder passed over me as I stood beside that massive stone, without which we would have been in inky blackness, darker than the darkest night! After a few moments silence, we turned and left the coffin to its solitude, and guided our footsteps toward the river Styx. We visited the 'Deserted Chambers' and 'Goran's Dome,' and then retraced our steps and crossed the Bottomless Pit, but not without a shudder. It is one hundred and seventy five feet deep. As I stood on the bridge that spans the chasm and gazed into that dark, yawning abyss, my whole frame quivered. Leaving the Bottomless Pit we passed through the 'Valley of Humiliation' and thence entered 'Jessica's Dome.' Here we came to a narrow winding way called 'Fat Man's Misery.' No one weighing over 200 pounds can pass through this avenue, and such an one must con-siderably reduce before they can' unexplored. Happily our party, after much wriggling and squeezing, all succeeded in gaining Relief. We crossed the river Styx by a natural bridge and after walking a short distance came to the Echo river. This we crossed on a boat, I will not attempt to describe the beautiful sounds made by the water here. Between Echo river and Cleveland's cabinet are many wonders; and, but for lack of space, I would describe them. The latter is by far the most beautiful and magnificent in the cave. There were innumerable crystals hanging from the top of the vault, the richness and variety of which quite bewilders one. Crystallized flowers of every description are found. It is a subterranean conservatory where plants from every zone are wonderfully and symmetrically produced. The shifting of the rays of light over this dazzling floral display was delightful and fascinating in the extreme. The deep blue dome of heaven, bedecked with gold-fringed clouds, the waving fields of growing grain, or the blooming orchards with their rainbow-tinted flowers, could not be more beautiful than this noble specimen of supernatural art. On the third day after our arrival our party departed, loath to leave, for Mammoth Cave affords a broad field for study."

ANNIE CLARK TODDIE, Box 109, Lawrence, Kan.

And now I am going to give you the simple story of a young girl out here in Kansas, who struggled for an education. I hope the thousands of girls who will read it will be fired with ambition; and instead of sitting weakly down in discouragement, feel that they need not born rich or lucky or gifted, will go ahead and make a place for themselves. In this plucky cousin has done. Success to her and all like her!

"I am a girl. But I think all Kansas readers will understand, when I say, we lived on an upland farm in the western part of the state and that father is a crippled soldier, how hard I had to work to go to school. There are eight of us children, and we were far from rich. If I could only teach or do something to earn a little money, what a great help it would be! But I well knew that I could not answer the examination questions given out at the County Institute, without a good school training. I thought over it a while and then one evening announced to father and mother that I by intention to assist brother on the farm one summer, and save the wages of a hired man. Of course they all protested, and father thought I was not strong enough, or did not realize what I was undertaking. But I did. 'I am strong,' I said, 'I am young and strong and willing, and I'm going to work for love and my board and clothes this summer.' I wound my tresses into a knot on top, gave the gray hairs a loving pat and then ran away to hitch up the team. I was long before we began our spring planting. Brother had raked and burned the corn-stalks and plowed and harrowed and got ready for listing—ploughing and planting. Brother was only twelve and I was sixteen; he held the handles of the plow and I walked a one side and drove. I did not make a very good driver at first, and we had some amusing experiences in the first piece. The rows were not very straight, but I said there would be time enough to straighten them to do better after that and think I did. So the days went by until we had planted and cultivated, had a hearty rain and washed out five acres which we re-listed. That was a great task, and I hoped, with all my heart never to have any more of it to do. When the corn came up and grew, we cultivated, hoeing it each had a cultivator and it did not take us long to go through it twice. When huge were in it and it did not yield as it should. But we shocked nine hundred shocks of fodder, and I think, helped up the hay and drilling in fifty acres of wheat. I was brown when I started out, but strong and plump and hearty. It was not all fun. Some of the most trying days I ever spent were in the harvest I ever known, were with brother in the corn fields. Now I know how romantic it would be to end by saying I went to school the next winter and got a certificate and a school at fifty dollars a month, and I at last married a millionaire. But I didn't. I did go to school the next spring, though, and tried hard to pass the examination. But I failed. The disappointment was only a stepping-stone to something higher. I made another effort the next spring and then I secured a little school out on the lonesome prairie, twenty miles from home.

EDITH WILLIAMS, Chico, Kansas.

I wonder how many cousins have heard about General Tom Thumb and his wife, who were the first to introduce people to the Japanese. I think, before the people. Everybody has heard of P. T. Barnum, that wonderful Yankee who brought introduced them to the public. Here is something interesting about Tom Thumb's wife:

"When a school girl, one of my teachers was a sister of Lavinia and Minnie Warren. Living in the adjoining district to the school, we used to go our school occasionally. We larger girls enjoyed hearing them sing. Once we passed a desk, little feet just reached as we sat on the seat in front. They were both very small then, and, as the years have passed, they grew no larger. They were pretty, with bright black eyes. Minnie looked like those of a large doll. Since then they have become known throughout the world as Mr. and Mrs. Tom Thumb. Her marriageable age, the celebrated showman, Barnum, came to this town, and, in his famous show, Tom Thumb; this real name was Charles S. Stratton, of Bridgeport, Conn., was the attraction. As they say, 'fell in love with her'; no doubt the love was returned, for they were married. Minnie afterward married Major Newell, and a little, fair-haired, blue-eyed child died soon after its birth. They were buried in one casket of the finest silver, and the grief-stricken Thumb died several years ago. His widow married Count Primo Paolo, the Italian Baron, who is now abroad most of the time, but sometimes come to the old home for a short visit. Mrs. Newell is more than eighty years old, lives there, also a brother, with his family. Mr. Warren, Minnie's father, often goes home, with their small carriage and pair of ponies.

They all have very pretty appearance upon the street. Perhaps many people will like to know of our homestead. It and the Adjoining land are owned by the Tory Judge, Peter Oliver; the Hall which he built in 1710 was burned by a mob one dark night. I have heard that he and Andrew his brother (lieutenant governor) forcing the Stamp Act through, fled to Boston, and

fled to Eng in the night. They, with Governor Hutchinson were proscribed by a proclamation from Majesty, George III, against the colonies. Many distinguished men in Boston, at that time, such as Sir John and Granville Temple, and others. Oliver's house was built of brick, with double corners, and cover, overlooking the Nemasket river. The scenery is lovely, as a stranger said, 'Like a Pennsylvania view.' I understand that at the Berkshire Athenaeum, in Pittsfield, there is a piece of brick, which was found in digging up roots of a tree, which stood upon the site of the house. Mr. Oliver presented a stone in our garden in 1869, my father found a gold coin, dated 1710, with an inscription—Guilielmus Dei-Gra. Mag. B. R. Fra. ET. Hib Rex. The coin was bright as when first minted, still remains.

MISS J. B. DEANE, Box 385, Middleboro', Mass.

It takes all sorts of people to make a world—don't it? And we let in a little about another kind.

"Having for a long time been an interested reader of this department, I now begin to give you a short description of the Mexican and their quiet mode of living. Surrounded almost by barren, scraggy mountains, with Mt. Franklin on the north, east and west, the Sierra Madres on the south in Mexico, and nestled at the feet of the banks of the famous Rio Grande, is situated the picturesque city of El Paso. Its population consists of 12,000 people of every nationality. On the outskirts of the town Mexicans build their houses, or hacienda. It is very interesting to watch them build. After selecting enough dirt, carefully collected from the surrounding country, they proceed to make adobe, which is an easy matter to build their mansion of any desired dimensions. Making up a large quantity of mud, first having boiled weeds to the paste, they proceed to plaster inside and out. The roof and chimneys are constructed out of the tin cans laid up in mud. The result is a warm, comfortable dwelling. More ambitious ones make adobes out of mud. Sun-dried bricks make a very comfortable house. They all have flat roofs and low ceilings. The Mexicans are a very superstitious race, and are devout Catholics. Their boy babies are named after some favorite saint; Juan or St. John being very popular, and Jesus being as common as Smith in America. All birthdays are celebrated with music and dancing for a day and night. Every among the lowest, the people are natural musicians. Their bill of fare consists of beans, chili, and tortillas, which latter are made between two rocks and boiled, with pepper and meat, they use no make Tamales. Pepper is their national dish, and they feed it to children so hot that tears stream from their eyes as they swallow it. Out in the foothills grow mesquite bushes; from the roots thereof they dig wood, bringing in on burros to sell to the *Americanos* for twenty-five cents a load, often producing several loads from the root of one little bush two or three feet high. Two dollars a month enables them to live well, according to their ideas. The very aged have a certain day to beg on; and at the close of it the incendiary has sufficient to last till his day comes again. On a little farm of ten acres they raise pepper, beans, corn and watermelons planted so thick you can scarcely tell which is which. The women are not neat about the house, with the exception of their yards, which, I must say, are an example to many Americans. All have flowers of some description. Takes about three years for a Mexican to finish his study, showing traits of character both meritorious and deplorable."

322 Senora St., El Paso, Texas.

It may perhaps interest the cousins to hear of some of the beauties of the "sunny south." If so, read this description of the Georgia mountains, where a charming summer resort nestling among the mountains of north Georgia. A southern cousin describes very prettily a visit to this region, and to the high mountain named Yonah.

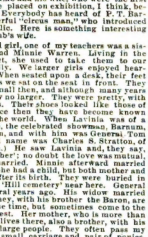
"About this beautiful mountain there clings a romantic Indian legend which I will give later on. Leaving the cars at Cleveland, Baby Talbe, we stopped to rest on the bank of the stream whose waters are distilled from the snows of the great precipice just beyond where their sparkling depths are gathered into a pool and the drops of victory spray. The Falls are reached by a perilous descent down the mountain. Picking our way carefully down the ledge—at first with bated breath—then with reckless impetuosity, we reached the foot of the Falls. As we paused, awed by the sublimity of this grand piece of God's handiwork, we felt a thousand times paid for the fatigue and peril of our journey. There are two Falls, one above the other; from the lower one the view of the whole, with the level plane that lies between. The upper falls are about twenty feet high. From the foot, the water appears to come from the sky; about them rises a wall of solid rock to the gorge below. Added to the grandeur of the falls, are the surroundings, its ledges of massive rocks, the growths of Mountain Laurel and spruce—and above all the deep blue sky reflected in the clear waters of the pool. No wonder that the Indians, with their poetry-loving natures, wove a romantic legend into the Indian traditions of which they frequented. One of the most beautiful of these is the following, which I have read, and story, Yonah, a young Indian chief was enamored of Nacoochee, the lovely daughter of the chief of a hostile tribe. In vain did the daughter plead with tearful eyes, for her lover; the old chief remained stony-hearted and vowed he would rather see her dead than wedded to his enemy. He was even so cruel as to tell her she must wed another chief, his friend, and noted for his valor. Seeing the father remain firm in his determination, and to save themselves from an unhappy parting, the unhappy pair fled to the summit of Mt. Yonah. There, from the highest cliff, since known as 'Lovers Leap,' looked in each other's embrace, they threw themselves down the awful precipice into the gorge below. At the Falls of which I have told you, midway in the two precipice of rock, is a stone the exact size and shape of a bride. The legend says that the Indian, heart-broken, buried, found the bodies of the unfortunate lovers and placed the sacred stone upon it all that country, in which to bury them, at the beautiful Falls. The legend says that the spirits of the lovers rest, and its said that often on moonlight nights, the spirits of the lovers can be seen, upon the beautiful Nacoochee, which has wandered back from the happy hunting grounds to keep watch over the lonely grave."

KATE POPE, Zebulon, Ga.

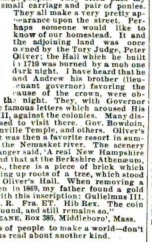
Here is an amusing experience of one who attempted to earn money with "Comfort."

"I want to tell the readers of COMFORT my experience in silk culture. We procured some eggs from a friend, and placed them in a box of cotton, in a darkened room and of a dark gray color. We put the envelope containing the little worms of silk-worm eggs on a high shelf in the cupboard. One day one of the boys discovered that more than a third of them hatched. We rushed about, got a board, nailed this around it, spread paper, put the worms on, and then procured some hedge branches, and the worms began to creep up and eat. When we had to clean out the cage, we lifted fresh branches containing the worms off on papers, shook off the trays, and then placed the fresh leaves on the trays. Eight or ten days after the last molt,

the worm prepares to skin its cocoon. It takes from three to four days to form a cocoon and three more for the worm to eat its way into the chrysalis state. The cocoons are made of a continuous thread generally a hundred yards long. We gathered



SILK-WORMS FEEDING.



A MEXICAN.

our cocoons, stripped off the loose or floss silk, had over a pound, put them in a mosquito bar bag, then in a little box with slats at each end, and sent it by express to the silk station. It cost us thirty cents to pay the expressage. We received a check from the silk station for forty cents, leaving a balance of ten cents for six weeks work. When we think of our hands pierced and bleeding with hedge thorns, we feel that we have contributed to the silk station got the profits—if there were any."

Mrs. H. Crosland, Box 25, Abilene, Kansas.

The following I consider good enough to have won a cash prize, if the writer had complied with the conditions. But she didn't, and so we must be content to give her a monogram.

"I am twelve years old and would like to tell the COMFORT cousins something about my pet dog. His name is Jip. I named him after my pet doll. His hair is as soft and dark as mamma's seal-skin sacque, and his eyes shine like diamonds. In the evening when he is on the rug before the fire, I say, 'Jip, warm your hands,' and he held out first one

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Old Moss Counted," "O'Grady's Goat," "The Tale of Maloney's Cow," "Parson Jingleby's Surprise," "Mick Doodle," "Johnny Bull and the Spirits," "The Countryman at the Show," "Intensely Utter," "Sockery Got a Hoss," "How Sockery Got a Hoss," "Tim Murphy's Irish Stew," "Schneider's Tonsorial," "What Troubled the Digger," and 86 others. The contents of this book have been selected with great care, the aim being to include only the best, hence it contains the cream of fifty of the ordinary recitation books, and is without doubt the best collection of comic recitations and readings ever published. A book of 64 large double-column pages, neatly bound in attractive paper covers. It will be sent by mail post-paid upon receipt of only Ten Cents for a three months subscription to COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

paw and then the other in the most comical way. To see him play at hide and seek is too funny for anything. I take a ball and hide it. When I am searching for a good place, Jip puts his head in a corner, or in the folds of Aunt Carrie's dress, until he hears me say 'ready,' and then he begins to hunt, smelling around and now and then looking at me to see if he is 'warming.' If he finds it I give him a penny, and what do you suppose he does? He barks at it and puts it in his mouth as well as any baker's and buys himself a roll. I know you won't believe what I am going to tell you, but it is true, and I will cross my heart to it." The other day a beggar woman came to our door, and when Jip saw us giving her money and things he trotted up stairs and came back with the last penny which he had earned, and offered it to her. When she said thank you, he barked, as much as to say, you are welcome. We couldn't help laughing at Jip's charity. But you should see him play the part of Little Red Riding Hood. One of my dear friends and I taught him. Her doll is Red Riding Hood's grandmother and mine the little girl Red Riding Hood. We dress Jip up in a gown and cap and he makes believe he is asleep when Red Riding Hood comes. He is just as well an actor. But the little fellow has got so fond of my doll's carriage, that he deliberately chews her out of it when he is tired, to take a nap on her soft white pillow. Whenever I tell him to take care do you do, he bows and barks; but he will not let strangers in the yard at all, and if they should try to enter he would bite them. But he likes children, and would not bite them. I nearly left out the most important thing. He goes to the post-office and gets the mail, and once he went after it and lost the whole bill. He picked it up and brought it home. I could tell you a great many more of his wonderful tricks, but it would make my letter too long."

LEONORA WERTHMILLER, 80 North Washington St., Tiffin, Ohio.

Although it is cold weather, perhaps some of the cousins may be interested in the description of a clam-bake.

"During the summer months steamboats run every half-hour from Providence, R. I., to the various shore resorts on Narragansett Bay, where there are dining rooms capable of seating from one hundred and three thousand at one time. These are frequently filled several times in a day, from mid-summer to fall and the popularity of the clam-bake can be obtained. I don't know the average number of bushels consumed daily, but I have known five hundred bushels cooked at one time at a single resort. The clams are cooked out of doors. A circle of stones about the size and shape of a man's head, are placed in position on the ground. The circle may be from five to fifteen feet in diameter according to the number of clams to be baked. Upon these stones are piled pieces of wood, over which are placed large paving stones. The pile is ignited and when it has burned down the stones are very hot. The ashes are swept away and over the stones is placed a layer of rock weed several inches deep. Upon this are spread the clams, previously thoroughly rinsed with sea-water. On top of the clams are placed wire baskets containing live lobsters, sweet potatoes, bins filled and dressing. The whole is covered with sail-cloth and over that is spread another layer of sea-weed. The rock-weed in contact with the heated stones generates steam which cooks the clams, at the same time giving them a flavor which cannot be produced in any other way. From twenty minutes to a half hour is required for cooking. The clam-bake is peculiarly a Rhode Island institution. Although they are served at numerous shore resorts outside of the State, they are never equal to those of Narragansett Bay. This is largely due to the fact that the clams which are dug here are more uniform in size and have a thinner shell than elsewhere. This fact was known to the Indians several hundred years ago before the settlement of the State. Mounds of shells have been found at several points near the shore that were left by the Indians. Besides shells, many other Indian relics such as arrow-heads, stone hatchets, etc., are found. I have in my possession quite a number of shells and arrow-points that were found a few years ago in one of the mounds. If any of the cousins are interested in such relics, I will be pleased to send a specimen to such as will enclose return postage."

GEORGE W. MORRIS, 64 John St., Providence, R. I.

Let us turn our eyes southward now, and look for waving pines.

"As I've never seen a letter in COMFORT from Aiken, S. C., (my home for more than two years), I thought some of the sick cousins might like to hear something about this noted winter resort—the Mecca of consumptives and all others with throat and lung diseases. "Tis a beautiful little city of 3,500 inhabitants, with streets 200 feet broad, laid out with many parks and planted with shade trees, with many beautiful residences surrounded by large yards and gardens filled with shrubbery and lovely flowers; so there is plenty of space between and close neighbors. There are many beautiful drives and places of interest in the neighborhood, and gayeties for those well enough to enjoy them. An effort is being made to raise enough money to build a 'Sanitarium' for the benefit of such invalids as are not able to come to the northern winters, and yet can only pay a small sum for nursing and attention. The sum needed is so much benefitted by it that I hope it may be erected soon, as they are the greatest sufferers. We have had about $800 in money towards it. Being lighted by electricity, with telegraph and telephone offices, and on the direct daily route from New York to New Orleans and Jacksonville, Florida, via Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Va., it is quite accessible. The climate and temperature are the same as that of Nice, Italy, and this being the common winter-shed of all Savannah and Edisto rivers, and also owing to its elevation of 565 feet above sea level, the soil is so porous that much of the water runs off so rapidly that an invalid can walk out an hour or two after a heavy rain. The usual mildness of the winter, with bright sunny days, permit the sick to go out and enjoy the remarkable dry and pure air, laden with life-giving fragrance of the pine forests which surround and protect Aiken from high winds. This wonderful climate has wrought miracles upon many; but a sojourn should be made by leaving too early in the spring, and going north the most trying month in the year—cold, bleak March. Invalids should remain till May or June. If one cannot spend the whole winter, it is better to go, then come in January or February and stay until the middle or last of April, then go to Asheville or Trion City, N. C., until June, when you will feel and appreciate the benefits of the Aiken air." YOURS truly,

ALICE W. SHEPHERD, Aiken, S. C.

How many of the cousins have ever tried amateur photography? Those who have will be interested in the following.

"I am a professional photographer, and that is what I am going to talk about. Perhaps most of you have had your pictures taken, but very few know how fascinating the work is, although it is possible for you all to understand it if you wish. When I commenced I bought a camera about like the one COMFORT offers. Six months later I went into a gallery to work and a month after I was running a gallery of my own. That was a year ago, not very long, eh? I don't pretend that I know everything about photography, but I can take a picture, and am glad to send Aunt Minerva one that I took. Now cousins, if you think it fun, just exert yourselves a little and get up a club and earn a camera from COMFORT. I am sure it will please both you and your friends; and I advise you, after you have taken the first picture, to go to your local photographer and have him develope it, and ask him to let you accompany him into the dark room. If he isn't a crank, he will explain many things worth knowing. I should like the cousins in the southern and western states to write to me, as I will make it to their interest."

W. H. BODELL, Romeo, Mich.

Yes, he sent a beautiful picture of a little child, and it hangs on Aunt Minerva's desk, just under the owls, all the time!

And now here are a lot more letters which we shall have neither time nor space to open this month. Among them is a good one from Frank W. Beall, Dorwood, Md., on patents, a subject already covered by an article in this number of COMFORT; and others from Willie May Brock, Lexington, Ga., on teaching; Mrs. Isadora Clark, Elliott, Iowa; Lenn Myrtle Brown, Doddy, Ky.; A. W. Ellis, Wellington, Kansas; Maggie Lothian, New Buffalo, Wyoming; Daisy M. Kostelly, Wilmington, N. C.; Hattie E. Hagaman, Temple's Mills, Fla.; Nellie E. Leacock, McLane, Erie Co., Pa.; Anna Ordway, Mapleton, Iowa; Claudius O. Philbrick, Fort Pierre, S. Dak.; Frederick, Pittsburgh, Kansas; Leonie A. Hooper, Waxchee, N. C.; Lorena H. Houghton, Moss, Utah; Miss Lina Craig, Davis City, Iowa; Lula M. Piscna, Wadsworth, Ohio; Julia Ellen Hood, Adairsville, Ga.; Inez Perry, Baltimore, Md.; Ida Fenton, Attica, Wis.; Ethel Parrott, Extra, Iowa; Inez Lundy, Magnolia, Ill.; Carl Fleming, (no address given).

Many of you do not know that in order to get your letter into any particular number of our paper, it should be sent at least three months in advance. I received over so many letters intended for the Christmas number long after the December issue was made up. COMFORT, like any of the large monthly magazines, is necessarily entirely planned out and put in shape several weeks before it comes out. Consequently when stories and letters reach us the last or even the middle of one month marked for competition in the next, they must wait a month or two.

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Before closing I desire to call your attention to the new and original department which has been added to COMFORT on the last page of this issue, and which is called COMFORT'S Palmistry Club. I think (just between ourselves, you know) that it is going to eclipse all the other departments of our favorite paper. "Digitus," who has consented to conduct this department, is certainly capable of making it do so, and we will cover new ground. No other paper has ever taken up the subject of palmistry in anything like this generous, thorough and scientific way; and it is pretty certain that it will create something of a sensation. I want you all to read and study carefully. Probably some of you have looked into this matter already, and to such I need only to mention that, we have a COMFORT Palmistry Club. Others will perhaps treat the whole matter with incredulity, and to such I must say that only after one has thoroughly studied a subject, has he or she a right to criticise it. Read and study, and you will become a believer and interested. And sometime, perhaps in the next issue, I will submit my hand to our illustrator and Digitus may tell you what he sees in it.

AUNT MINERVA.

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma and all throat and lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who wish it, this recipe, in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing, with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. Noyes, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.

GRIP ABOARD A LIGHTSHIP.

Capt. Hearne of steamer Gen. Whitney, which arrived at New York yesterday from Boston, reports spending the Thanksgiving Day on lightship yesterday. She needs medical assistance, as most of the crew are sick with the grip. The nearest light house inspector at Boston will send medical aid at once, either from Woods Holl or New Bedford.

A "RUN DOWN" and run-down feeling is the first warning that your liver isn't doing its work. You will be torpid liver and the impure blood that follows it, you are easy prey to all sorts of ailments.

Now is the time to take Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. As an alterative, restorative tonic, to repel disease and build up the needed flesh and strength, there's nothing to equal it. It rouses every organ into healthful action, purifies and enriches the blood, braces up the whole system, and restores health and vigor.

For every disease caused by a disordered liver or impure blood, it is the only *guaranteed* remedy. If it does not benefit or cure, in every case, you have your money back.

$500 is offered, by the proprietors of Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy, for an incurable case of Catarrh. Their remedy perfectly and permanently cures the worst cases.

HAVE YOUR OWN WORLD ON HAND.

The Columbian Globe is a great geographical toy for young or old, being made of heavy goods and gotten up in bright Lithographic colors; it is a grand object lesson toy or useful ornament, showing the grand outlines of both hemispheres, the route over which Columbus sailed in 1492, and a picture of the ship *Santa Maria* he sailed. Every one understands how necessary a globe is in the study of geography. The child who has one will make the most rapid progress in the study of the child will make who has none, and for all practical purposes cure is just as good at one costing five or ten dollars. Ours cannot be broken, no fear of the children breaking it. Agents will make money selling them, because every school boy or girl will have one, and one or more can be sold to every family. They even amuse small children to use as a Football. They come same as the other stuffed toys, so you can fill and sew up, no cutting out. If you send Six Dollars for a three months' subscription to COMFORT, we will send one free postpaid.

Address, COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

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Is a very large and very interesting, illustrated literary and family publication. In order to secure 100,000 new subscribers, for only Thirty-five Cents we will send THE HEARTHSTONE for one year, together with Twenty Complete Novels by Famous Authors.

These Twenty Novels are bright, breezy and very interesting, are printed in readable type, from new plates on good quality of paper, and illustrated. We manufacture the books ourselves and therefore save all intermediate profits. The Twenty Novels are as follows:

THE TRUE LOVE OF HER LIFE, BY AMANDA M. DOUGLASS.
UNDER THE WILL, BY MARY CECIL HAY.
WANTED—A WIFE, BY JOHN STRANGE WINTER.
ONCE LOVED NOT FORGOTTEN, BY WALTER BRANT.
HOW HE WON HER, BY RETT WINWOOD.
MYSTERY OF STIRLING HOUSE, BY MARY A. DENISON.
AN ENGAGED MAN, BY EIRENE ENGWILTON.
MY HUSBAND AND I, BY COUNT LYOF TOLSTOI.
THE BEAUTIFUL WIDOW, BY MARTHA R. WILLARD.
A HOUSEHOLD SAINT, BY MRS. W. H. PALMER.
ALTHOUGH HE WAS A LORD, BY MRS. FORRESTER.
IN DEADLY EARNEST, BY ADA CHREVER THAYER.
MISS RIVERS'S REVENGE, BY HUGH CONWAY.
A WOMAN'S PLOT, BY AMANDA M. DOUGLASS.
TWICE SAVED, BY AMELIA B. EDWARDS.
HE LOVED AND RODE AWAY, BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL.
THAT LAST REHEARSAL, BY MRS. ALEXANDER.
THE LIFTED VEIL, BY GEORGE ELIOT.
SHE LOVES AND LIES, BY WILKIE COLLINS.
LUCY'S LOVER, BY KATHERINE S. MACQUOID.

Note This The literary matter in the Twenty Complete Novels would ordinarily make about twelve cost $2.00 to $5.00. Upon the receipt of **Thirty-five Cents**, in silver, postage stamps or postal note, we will send THE HEARTHSTONE for one year and all the Novels mentioned above. Address, **N. Y. HEARTHSTONE, 285 Broadway, New York.**

SOFA PILLOW TWO FEET SQUARE.

A Souvenir Sofa Pillow Cover two feet square, FREE. A Great Work of Art—a genuine Comfort, and sensible article one can have around the House. All City Homes have from three to a dozen in all the rooms; it is a great fad to get up new and novel designs in home and comfortable adornments. A bright artist has designed a lasting souvenir of the Columbian Exhibition, to be made up in special, durable, pretty goods in no less than **fifteen** colors and shades, and makes a bright and striking effect wherever room. Besides the Flags of 23 Nations you can see the Interior Views of the principal Buildings of the Union over the Administration Building. In the four corners you notice the Naval and other exhibits. That famous warship Illinois being prominent and conspicuous, and the Lagoon and other pleasure boats. The Art Palace before which lazily float the gondolas, Venice. A view of the Machinery building standing by the lakeside bathed in the light of a full moon, and the Electrical Building guarding its wonderful works of the new found science. This is all portrayed on a deep blue field embellished by twinkling stars. Our best artists and graceful fetishes of drapery. As they are now being turned out to fill large orders, once ordered we advise all to send for a sample and you then can decide how many you want for your own home or to sell to neighbors. Every person in the land will want at least two, one for front and back of a pillow. As you probably have plenty of cotton down or feathers handy, and they only require to be filled and sewed together, they come within the reach of all, and we give one way for each three months' subscription at 35c. each; 2 for 35c.; 3 for 50c.; one dozen for $1.00.

Address, COMFORT, AUGUSTA, MAINE.

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25 DIFFERENT PIECES

DINING ROOM SET — PARLOR SET — CHAMBER SET

The furniture comprises a **Parlor Set**, consisting of Upright Piano, with stool, Centre Table, Sofa, three Easy Chairs, Small Table, Foot Rest, Folding Screen, Easel and Picture. **Dining Room Set**, Dining Table, four Dining Chairs, and Sideboard. **Chamber Set**, Bedstead, Dressing Case, with mirror, Wash Stand, Towel Rack, Foot Stool, and three Chairs. The furniture is finished in Black Walnut, in a fresh mahogany color, and when cut out, and set up, forms a complete, **fine** parlor furniture, and correctly represents the handsome and expensive furniture of the present day. The set consists of 25 pieces, and is just the right size for the little girl's little mamma. They are easy to set up the furniture ready for use in a few minutes, from the plain directions, sent with each set. **The first set of twenty-five pieces** will be sent complete and post-paid for **25 cents**, or three lots for **50 cents**.

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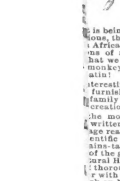
A Useful, Ornamental, and an elegant card receiver, representing the finest piece of work exhibited at the World's Fair. The Ferris Wheel was the wonder of all Nations, and was the greatest mechanical work and revelation to mechanics and incomprehensive to the multitude. It was the greatest single attraction at the Fair and in its 56 cars could carry a thousand persons at a time, and completed every twenty minutes, thus it gained over a million dollars in receipts. Now we have reproduced in miniature a unique, pretty and useful representation of this mammoth American wonder, which we desired in every home, we have produced this Fine Silvered LACE WORK SOUVENIR to present **Free** as a premium to all persons who will send in the names of two yearly subscribers to "Comfort," at 35 cents each, or if you send 50 cents to renew your own subscription for two years we will mail one **Free**. Try for the two subscribers and you can easily get the souvenir for 50 cents if you have no use for it yourself. We will sell sample tray for 35 cents. Address, COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

Four-Handed Ancestors.

WRITTEN FOR COMFORT.

At, 1894, *by The Gannett & Morse Concern.*



Did we or did we not descend from monkeys? that is the question. According to the latest theory of evolution, we did. And it is a

is being very generally accepted, even by those, thinking people. Prof. Garner who Africa several years studying the habits ons of monkeys, fully believes that they hat we shall yet come to be classed with monkey language, just the same as we do atin!

interesting study, whether one believes in furnished by the Darwinian theory. And family can never know too much about creation.

the most wonderful and comprehensive written in such a way as to be interesting age reader, who knows nothing about the entific terms, was gotten up after many time taking research by Professor J. G. of the greatest naturalists that ever lived, ural History contains 800 pages of closely thoroughly authentic and reliable matter with 500 illustrations. It is the standard rk on Natural history, and has heretofore bed only in that country, costing about in consequence. Now, owing to pauicky the recent triumphs in the art of book this country—by which a book may be ts, pasted and bound all in one great changed by one man—this masterpiece of can be furnished free to Comfort explained on another page of this issue. ily there is no longer any need of that ig the part of the average public about the ls which formerly prevailed. And neither a body for men and the animal creation them, if the knowledge of natural history ere wide-spread and general. If we had intelligence of our domestic animals, and ge exceeded by the great Creator, there ach less cruelty than at present. Surely ets the lower orders since he made them and to endow them with so much in

hal is utterly untameable, and so totally ble to be insensible to the touch of kindness. many animals which are proof against the ded way of education, and which are only ere fierce and obstinate by the tortures which were formerly so freely bestowed on neouraw of training. But these very improved to be sensitive to gentle and kind and, though fierce and savage towards one approached in order to torment, became pidness when in the hands of a kind and g owner.

hundred pages and numberless lifelike be devoted to stories and descriptions of little animals included in the monkey Some who has not studied the subject can the wonderful variety of these species, from Mind baboon, as large as a man, down to tures no larger than a kitten.

book does not deal with monkeys alone. ny four-footed animal that ever lived is in it, and that in such a readable way that interests the old, the youngest reader may mrstand it. Foreign, native and domestic ecome in for comprehensive treatment, dean by the book down even to a higher nd all the animal creation and for the ge created them. Every kind of dog that the many varieties of cats, the different horses with their relations and cousins

and treatment of hydrophobia is a valuable; while the curious and rare animal world furnish chapters of surpriseing

nr instance, a creature called the Tagnan native of Australia. While it is large sep in the depths of its arboreal retreat, in almost any few except the ever-watchful native of New South Wales. ierach on the bark of a tree, or a that has adhered to the side of the spectrich the animal has selected, it is only the black man as if he had seen the end the tree and enter the domicile. He s to guess from the appearance of the the aspects of the hairs how many hours d since the animal left the traces behind conjecture very accurately whether the ay is still within. Should the indications rable, the native proceeds to cut little tree, in which he thrusts his toes and ascends the huge tree as easily as a brick up a ladder. Having reached the aperlike the tree sharply once or twice with the hatchet, so as to intend, by the echo turned to the blow, the position of the anhe hollow. He then rapidly cuts a hole tree into the cavity, seizes the concealed le tail, jerks it out before it has time to or teeth, dashes it against the tree and the ground, dead.

ney is not the only prehensile animal in animals one that has not curled up by the world. There is a creature called the d lives in the South Sea Islands. In size larger than a large cat, and it lives to

The tail of this creature is very powerful and the animal never seems to be contheir tail. Whenever the Cocus thinks that it ty or lazy, it may be seen to come down ly suspends itself by its tail from a There hangs, swaying about in the wind leaves as if it were some lifeless fruit. Cuscus in consciousness of human gaze, and spended itself by its tail from a branch, unterfeited death until it fancier that the ypass. Nothing will induce the animal to at signs of life as long as the eye is not it.

very strange creature is the Sloth, a native Indies. The peculiarity noticed in all which there are several species is, that the whole of their lives suspended, head dowmward, from the branches of trees. ever gets upon a bough, but simply takes tslons over it, and hangs in perfect securr to enable the animal to escape from tiger of falling, the limbs are enormously fore-legs are remarkable for their length, e of all four feet are furnished with strong ws. Upon the ground the Sloth is out ft its element, as its limbs are wholly unsupporting the weight of the body, and ve cannot be employed as adjuncts to the nilty manner in which the Sloth can adapt s to be unfortunately placed in such a by hitching his claws into any depresnay afford him a hold, and so dragging wly and painfully along. On the trees, t is quite a different creature, full life tion, and traversing the branches at a ch in anything but sluggish. The Sloth in windy weather, because the branches blown against each other, and the animal ms from one tree to another without deson the ground. The food of the Sloth consies, buds and young shoots. It appears to mend of water being satisfied with the hich clings to the herbage on which it

ever, are but single instances of a world ral curiosities. We advise everyone to selves of the opportunity we are enabled providing themselves with a book so full and interest in everyday, matter-of-fact

we descended from monkeys, and whether tongue is our own "lost language" or not, one of us who would not be benefitted by a more complete knowledge of their strange and interesting habits.

As our remarkable offer is made exclusive to Comfort readers, to get this book free, it must be added here that no magazine or paper in America, no matter what its price may be, will present as valuable and entertaining matter during the coming years as this marvel of newspaperdom, which costs but twenty-five cents for a whole year.

CURIOUS FACTS.

4,000 Americans live in Paris.
Coal brings $12 a ton in London.
The Chinese had the first compass.
Paris is the richest city in the world.
Germany has 34,350,000 acres of forest.
The world mails 6,000,000,000 letters every year.
Great Britain had the first life-station in 1824.
There are 850 protestant missionaries in India.
Sunflower-paper is the latest thing in Kansas.
Dagaboe wealth is estimated at $50,000,000.
There are now 50 abandoned ships on the Atlantic.
Goethe, the great German poet, was a tailor's son.
A Scotch castle has cost 1 million dollars to build.
About 4,000,000 copies of the Bible are sold annually.
There are now 165 women ministers in this country.
Euclid's Elements of Geometry dates back to 300 B.C.
A single bakery in New York makes 20,000 pies a day.
The first United States war-ship was a cruiser of 1775.
Canals stretch over 35,317 miles of the world's surface.
They have three harvests a year in some parts of India.
A single cheese, made in Canada, weighs 22,000 pounds.
New York State has a larger population than all Canada.
The cone saw, in use at Rutland, Vt., does the work of 100 men.
There are 80,000 stuttering children in the schools of Germany.
12,000 bushels of oysters are eaten every day in New York city.
Paper false teeth are a modern achievement—paper bed-quilts also.
The Chicago engineer travels on an average, 30,000 miles a year.
The recd in Greenwich Observatory, near London, is made of paper.
Termite ants in South Africa often have nests twelve feet high.
A man in Kansas City has a step-son ten years older than himself.
Hydrographic engineers say the Gulf of Mexico is one foot higher than in 1850.
The world's sugar crop equals 49,000,000 horse-power, or that of 1,000,000,000 men.
A gum tree has been discovered in Australia that is 435 feet high—the tallest tree on earth.
The coldest place in the world is the interior of Alaska in 30 degrees below zero.
It took 21,000 soundings and 8,000 borings to excavate Hell Gate—near New York City.
A Samuel Johnson's (the writer's armchair was recently sold at auction in Wales for $275.
The first dictionary was compiled by the Chinese about 1100 B.C. and contained 40,000 characters.
A bridge in China is five and one-fourth miles long and a tunnel in Mexico is 32,500 feet in length.
An apple-tree recently blew down in Connecticut, which was known to be a century and a half old.
In every mile of railway there are left between rails for expansion amounts to seven feet four inches.
The earliest coins made for America were cast in Bermuda in 1616. Only two pieces now in existence.
During the past 20 years, 328,000 divorces have been granted in this country—90 per cent of them to women.
Of the $9,050,000 worth of silver used annually in the United States, $2,000,000 is made into solid spoons and forks.
A Harrisburg, Pa., man has an umbrella that has been in his family 105 years. Probably it has never been lent.
So great was the year's catch of whales that the price of whale-bone for only 12 a pound, lower than ever before.
There are, according to the last census, twenty inhabitants for every square mile of territory in the United States.
Catarrh is almost unknown among Quakeresses—doubtless because their bonnets are a real protection to the head.
In a ton of gas coal there are 1,500 pounds oc coke, 20 gallons of ammonia water and 140 pounds of coal tar, besides the gas.
A Vermont paper-mill has just colored a contract with the U. S. government for 1,000,000 playing cards, which will amount to 11,000 tons.
In Indiana, 2,000 people married three times and divorced as many. She is now nineteen years old and looking for another husband.
Of the 1,500 medals awarded to exhibitors in the Women's Building of the World's Fair, the Mexican women got the largest proportion.
The parachute was invented by a Frenchman in 1785; and the first use of it in America was in Philadelphia early in this century.
A San Francisco merchant has a suit of clothes some years ago for a small plot of land. The same plot was sold by his creditors for $1,500.
Great Britain's public debt is $3,365,000,000. At the beginning of Victoria's reign it was $4,000,000; now $35,000,000 was paid in one lump last March, toward liquidation.
Only one paper is published within the Arctic Circle, and that is at Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska. It is the easy boast of the people of Greenland to be the Arctic region.
The Pacific Ocean covers 71,000,000 square miles; the Atlantic, 35,000,000 miles; the Indian, 28,000,000 miles; and five oceans combined, America and three America, Raleigh, De Soto, La Salle, Marquette, Hennepin and Hennepin Canal, Franklin, Lincoln, Champlain has a single place named in his honor, Roberval, De Monts, Argall, Iberville, Frobisher, Georges, Cartier, Baltoba, Dablon, Brassart, Baffin, Bering and Goswald have none.

$12.00 to $35.00 a week can be made by any one working for us. Parties preferred who can furnish a horse and travel through the country; a team, though, is not necessary. A few vacancies for good men. Men and women of good character will find this an exceptional opportunity for profitable employment. Spare hours may be used to good advantage. F. P. JOHNSON & CO., 1009 Chestnut St., Richmond, Va.

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VALENTINES FOR ALL SUBSCRIBERS.

Besides the usual spread of good things, the February number of COMFORT, will contain many interesting items about Valentines, and it being the month when "Birds commence to build mates" and Cupid is supposed to be very active, we are going to mail a package of cute little Valentines in Lithograph Lace Work, regular *Cupid Darts*, FREE to every one sending six cents for a three months' trial subscription. Address, COMFORT, Augusta, Maine.

WILL LAST A FAMILY FOR YEARS.

Every one realizes the importance of marking their clothing with Indelible Ink. We have a wonderful Pen with which you can not only write on clothing but write letters with also; you simply dip it in cold water and write in the ordinary way, and after marking your clothes with this magic article you cannot boil or wash the name out. It comes in a handsome little case, and as we want agents to handle it with other goods we will mail one free if six cents is sent for postage, etc.

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$3.85 KING VIOLIN

This is a Beauty. We guarantee our King violin equal to anyone's $25 instrument or money refunded. It is on the Italian model, made of best seasoned wood well put together; ebony finished finger board, tail piece and pegs from maple neck. We sell the King at this low figure in order to advertise it. The price includes bow, rosin, fancy metal tie fine lubed patentized bow and a piece of rosin. Worth $15 to $20 extra.

$5.85 KING SPECIAL VIOLIN. Same as above but in the best imported Bohemian wood and has been selected especially on account of its excellence of tone.

$6.85 KING GUITAR

A thoroughly satisfactory instrument, equal to any other guitar that sells for $15.00. We guarantee it in every respect. It must not be compared with the cheap guitars usually sold at $6.85. Neck carefully adjusted so that the strings lay closely down on the fingerboard, making it easy to play. Finished in oil and neck has genuine ebony finger board, beautifully colored binding and inlaid pearl, patent brass machine head, ebonized tail piece. We offer this "King" as the best guitar for the price that has ever been put on the market.

$8.85 KING SPECIAL GUITAR. This is the same as above, only the wood is selected with more care as a fine King should be. Finished in dark mahogany, rosewood or oak. It is a beautiful instrument. Words cannot convey the value.

$4.85 KING BANJO

The King banjo has 4 inch nickle rim, woodlined, wired edge, mahogany finished neck, ruled frets, perfect fingerboard. The King banjo will sell for $15.00 everywhere. It is made with extra care, is handsomely ornamented, and fully adjusted and equipped with the best of everything. It is fully guaranteed and we will refund $15.00 back to any one who purchases one and before leaving the factory, and is fitted with patent tension hoop and tone modulator.

$6.85 KING SPECIAL BANJO. This instrument is the same as the King except that it is made more fancy, having positions on finger board dotted, it also has more frets than the other instrument.

$7.75 KING MANDOLIN

This mandolin is a fine instrument, and is fully guaranteed for perfect workmanship, quality of tone and durability. Sell for $25.00 elsewhere. It has 8 ribs and is the genuine "Neapolitan" model, finished in best imported oil, inlaid pearl, ebony finger board, a perfect mask and carefully modeled neck. The most modern improvements are employed in making the "King" mandolin. The cheap mandolins on the market are worthless and this is the lowest price ever put on a first class instrument. We guarantee it to equal any $25.00 mandolin.

$10.75 Value as above only it has genuine white, curly maple back and sides, and finished in a finer style.

Instruction Books.

We will send the genuine Bowers Instruction book for the guitar, mandolin, or banjo, free with any instrument. Price of these books is 25c. each the world over. They contain simple methods for teaching the beginner, also fine, valuable and popular airs arranged from the easy to the more difficult. Every player should have one.

TERMS:

We ask no money until you have seen the instrument. Upon receipt of the instrument at your nearest express office, state the instrument you desire and we will send it to you **FOR EXAMINATION FREE.** The instruments are all stringed ready for use. If after trying you are satisfied that the instrument is well worth the price asked, you pay the express agent the amount and it is yours. If not, you return it to the agent at our expense. Nothing can be more fair. We are able to offer them at those low prices for every one will be as satisfied with them and sell another. Every instrument is guaranteed as represented. We refer to any commercial agency or the Editor of this paper. Write today sure. Address,

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IT IS A COMPLETE PUZZLE.

To give an extended explanation of the picture would require too much space and besides it would take away from the charm of the picture, as can one experience more genuine satisfaction in making any discovery that is looking at an object offer to the eyes? We shall therefore attempt nothing more than to call your attention to a few of the thousands of objects plainly visible in the picture.

It takes from 100 to 6,000 small objects to make some of the large pictures. Hold the picture before you, the eagle near the center right side up. Around the outer circle are shown all of the principal coins of different nations, and mixed in among them are several small circles in which are inside these are the marseilles flags, and the coats of arms are formed in the circles next inside the flags. Prominent among the objects around the edge of the square inside the flags are the principal figures in Mythology, Minerva, Neptune, Mars, Mercury, Venus, Diana, one of the Nymphs, and Cupid; with Adam and Eve and the Devil in the lower right hand corner. At the end of the eagle's left wing notice a form of Apollo, that is made up of a multitude of small vertical forms a bag of liers, flour, meal, etc.; the heads of the bags represent different species of butterflies, and the strings that tie the bags are feelers of the insects. Turn the bags upside down and it will be seen that they form the visor of a cap which covers a large head the outlines of which are plainly visible; reversing the picture you will see another large face having the same mouth and the eagle's right wing forming its nose. On the lefts of the picture you will see four bags, complete with four two heads, two in a sitting and two in a reclining posture. Just below and a little to the left of the eagle two large eyes are seen, and the outlines of a large face are plainly visible. The eagle is perched upon the staff of an American flag, which in turn forms a flute, a boat hook and the side of a harp; the arm side of the harp is made by an iron fence, and the third by a ladder, and the ladder will be seen to form the barrel of a gun. The flue lines near the bottom of the flag form a gallows, from which a man is suspended. Underneath the eagle is an anchor, the ring of which forms a finger ring; within the ring can be seen a ship, a light house, and a rough rugged rock in the foreground. Turn the eagle's right wing upwards and the rough rugged rock will assume the form of the "Old Man of the Mountain."

The above are sufficient to illustrate the character of the work, and we feel that it cannot fail to please both the old and the young, the educated and the uneducated, as every object to be found in every day life is represented thereon, and new objects will be seen at every time it is examined. All who see it have to acknowledge that it is the most wonderful production of human skill and design ever executed, and is pronounced by all who have seen it to be the greatest curiosity the public welcomes and American Artists to produce its equal; and further we challenge the public to find the head of Geo. Washington, which is plainly visible, and to the persons who find the most objects that occupy the largest space upon the drawing we will give the sum of $100.00. Photographs of the Encyclopedia are for sale by agents at $1.25 each.

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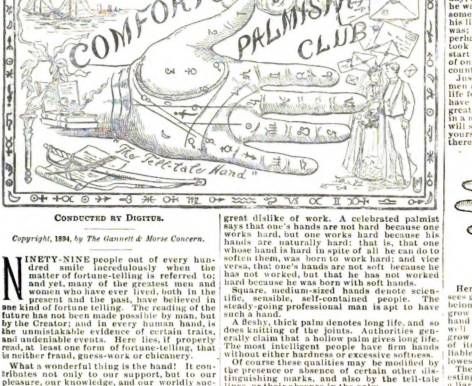

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NINETY-NINE people out of every hundred smile incredulously when the matter of fortune-telling is referred to; and yet, many of the greatest men and women who have ever lived, both in the present and the past, have believed in one kind of fortune-telling, and the future has not been made possible by man, but by the Creator; and in every human hand, is the unmistakable evidence of certain traits, and undeniable events. Here lies, if properly read, at least one form of fortune-telling, that is neither fraud, guess-work or chicanery.

What a wonderful thing is the hand! It contributes not only to our comfort, but to our pleasure, our knowledge, and our worldly success. To be deprived of our hands is one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall us. A blind man sees through his hands and reads through his fingers. A deaf-mute talks by his; and many a cripple having his hands has been able to earn a good living. Misfortune may turn the hair white, or make the head bald; the voice may become broken; the eyesight grown dim with age; the whole frame totters, but there is something written in the hand which time cannot wither or age decay, and which is as unmistakable as the hand-writing on the wall.

Like everything else that is good, there has been in the past much jugglery and humbug practiced under the name of palmistry. A good, reliable chiromancer (palmist) is almost as rare as a white blackbird; but COMFORT, always in the van with new and original ideas, and ever seeking for something novel in the field of literature and science, has secured the services of an expert who understands thoroughly this somewhat mystical subject, and will now have it presented in a scientific and truthful light.

"Give me the hand of an artist of talent," says a celebrated chiromancer, "and without ever having seen his pictures I will tell whether he prefers form to color, I will guess for details, whether inspiration or reflection guides his work, whether he works from imagination or from nature, and whether he will achieve success or not." And Dumas, the great writer, says that palmistry will soon take its place as a grammar of the human organism.

The hands of no two people are exactly alike both in form and in general lines. As characters differ in the human family, so do their hands. It indeed seems strange, that our characters, our past and our future, are plainly written on our hands. And yet, many ancient and a constantly increasing number of modern thinkers believe this. Certain configurations and forms of the hand have been found to accompany, invariably, certain phases of character. Of late years, the dust of ages, that has so long obscured the science of palmistry, has been cleared away, and this occult subject is now offered to the world as an exact science. It is no longer a mystery of mysteries; it is a branch of knowledge with definite rules, and classifications. It is not pursued only by ignorant and superstitious old women dressed as gypsies, and who know next to nothing of the real gist of the matter. It has been studied by persons of education and refinement; and the apostles of palmistry make no longer try to surround themselves with an air of oriental mystery, or hide behind the veil of occultism. Certain lines, certain forms of the hand, mean certain things; the reader of palms to-day looks at the thing fairly and squarely, according to the light that has been dim for centuries, but which burns brightly in 1894—and states plainly what he sees there. Palmistry is the fad with the fashionables of the large cities; and English, American and East Indian chiromphists have found another way by which knowledge is power. Society is showing its hand—and those who are able to read it are an the high tide of popularity.

What is the difference between chirognomy and chiromancy? asks someone.

Chirognomy is the science which reveals the disposition, character, proclivities and occupation of a man, by the shape and size of his hand.

Chiromancy does all this, and much more. It tells by the lines, heavy and light, crossed and un-crossed, not only the character but the history, past, present and future. No person whose life-line was short, weak and broken ever lived a long or a healthy life.

No one whose head-line was weak or wanting, ever amounted to much, or became a person of independent judgment; and no one whose heart-line was missing or very much broken ever made a happy marriage. Strange, isn't it? And yet, events have proved the statement true, over and over again.

There are certain characteristics which the hand tells, whether its owner will or no. The human lips may lie but the hand cannot. A person versed in chirognomy can easily tell by looking at a hand the leading traits of the person who owns it. The islands, stars and

ISLANDS. CROSSES.

crosses in a hand mean many important things; and our next article will treat of them more fully.

A slim, narrow hand betokens a weak temperament, feeble imagination and but little force of character; although if it is a plump hand, of a suitable thickness, it will be improved.

If the palm is longer than the fingers, the owner is inclined to sensuality, gluttony and material desires.

Short thick hands, with large thumbs betray covetous dispositions and a desire for riches or greatness.

A hand has 7 distinct mountain regions, each

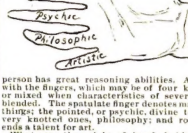
great dislike of work. A celebrated palmist says that one's hands are not hard because one works hard, but one works hard because his hands are naturally hard: that is, that one whose hand is hard in spite of all he can do to soften them, was born to work hard; and vice versa, that one's hands are not soft because he has not worked, but that he has not worked hard because he was born with soft hands.

Square, medium-sized hands denote scientific, sensible, self-controlled people. The steady-going professional man is apt to have such a hand.

A flesh, thick palm denotes long life, and so does knitting of the joints. Authorities generally claim that a hollow palm gives long life. The most intelligent people have firm hands without either hardness or excessive softness.

Of course these qualities may be modified by the presence or absence of certain other distinguishing marks, and also by the tell-tale lines, or their absence in the palm.

The shape of the hand, in fact, has much to do with a person's character. The thumb, for instance, as it is the most useful, is the most important of the digits in palm-reading. If it be disproportionately small, its owner is of weak character. If large, the person has a strong will, especially if the first joint be well developed. If the second joint is longest, the



person has great reasoning abilities. And so with the fingers, which may be of four kinds—or mixed, when characteristics of several are blended. The spatulate finger denotes material things; the pointed, artistic, divine things; very knotted ones, philosophy; and rounded ends a talent for art.

What was the origin of hand-shaking? It was first done to emphasize the fact that each person carried no concealed weapon, for the purposes of surreptitious murder. And what a difference there is among people with regard to this simple ceremony. When you take the hand of certain ones it is—as Mr. Kinsahby says—like taking hold of a dead fish; while others give a warm, genial hand-clasp that sends a magnetic thrill through you and you never forget the latter person. Among some savage tribes the hands are held up, when approaching an enemy for purposes of council, as a sign of peace; just as highway burglars and train-robbers to-day in some parts of the country, accost their victims with "Hold up your hands."

The most abject expression of humility is the act of kissing the hand—does it be kissing the Pope's toe?

Mr. Heron Allen, a celebrated English authority on palmistry tells a very interesting story in which a murderer was traced by the lines of his hand. A detective, on visiting the scene of the murder, noticed the imprint of the murderer's blood-hand, on the window sill. He studied carefully, the peculiar spiral lines on the ball of the thumb, made a correct drawing of them. With this tracing, he tracked the guilty man from place to place; by pretending to be a fortune-teller, he examined hundreds of thumbs, but found none for many months to correspond to the impress on the window-sill. At last, however, he found its exact counterpart, confronted the man with the murder, when the villain broke down and confessed all, bringing up on the scaffold as a direct result of that blood-stained thumb-print on the window ledge.

There are people—plenty of them, (and doubtless some who read this paper) who will say that there is nothing in all this; that there is no difference between hundreds of hands of people around us; that the lines come and go regardless of meaning; that the lines are made by folding the hands; and finally that it is wicked to attempt to solve these mysteries. Now 1st, examination of the first hundred hands you come across will show a marked difference, with no two exactly alike in every particular. 2nd, patient watching of the lines in your own hand will convince you that they do not change materially as the years go by; smaller, minor lines may be added, but the main ones remain the same. 3rd, look inside the hand of the smallest baby and you will find the chief lines, plainly marked, and never after materially altered. Even the unborn child has the same lines; which does prove that folding the hands does not produce the lines. And 4th, as to its being wrong to study palmistry, it is only another way of studying the mysterious secrets of nature. Is the study of plants, stones and the inner processes of nature wrong? Is it wrong to study the stars and the strange, mysterious laws that govern them? Is planetology wrong? In short is not any form of study into the secrets of nature—which is only another name for God—perfectly legitimate? When man was made with a heart, a brain, a soaring insight, and above all, an insatiate longing to solve the problems of life and death and all nature, did not the great Creator intend that he should use all these faculties to His glory? And both the study of palmistry, and that strange science known as astrology, reveals to the true, earnest searcher only a reverent knowledge of the grand workings of an infinite scheme which could have been planned only by a wonderful and Omni-potent Creator. In short, it leads only to a greater and deeper respect for God's

large calls to w

stance of a gentleman whose name is known all over this great country of ours; who began life as a clerk in a grocery store down in Maine, with no prospect of ever rising above his fellows; and how a phrenologist came along one day, examined his "bumps" and told him that he was intended by Nature to be the head of some great business, and had no right to bury his light under a bushel by remaining where he was; and how the young man, believing more, perhaps, in himself than in the phrenologist, took heart of fate and cast about for the right start in life, and how to-day he is at the head of one of the greatest publishing houses in the country.

Just so has the good hand of certain young men and women, resolved to them the ends in life for which they are best fitted. You may have the ability to become a great artist or a great writer, although you are to-day drudging in a mill or a school-room. If so, your hand will show it. And why should you not avail yourselves of the knowledge that lies hidden there?

Here is a hand, for instance, in which Digitus sees great capabilities for evil. If such a hand belongs to a child, it will have little chance to grow up; and in any case the owner of such a hand will not live to be over fifty. It would be well for the child who has this hand not to grow up; and if it does, it will become, in spite of itself, a thief and a dissolute character, liable to ruin both health and character by the lowest forms of dissipation.

There are so many things that are both interesting and helpful to know. Do you know that a liar habitually keeps his hands closed? And that he cannot tell a lie with hands held up your own hand to the light. If you can see light between your fingers, you cannot keep a secret. So never trust anyone whose hands are like that.

To be able to read not only your own, but other people's palms, is a great gift. It is an art that cannot be learned in a day. But with a reliable and thoroughly trustworthy book on the subject, such as COMFORT is now getting out, anyone with ordinary intelligence can master the art.

At neighborhood parties or receptions, the person who can read palms is the most popular person in the room; at a fair or any entertainment for benevolent purposes, a large amount of money might be realized by the woman who would place in the office of a gypsy and read palms at 25 cents apiece; and a Shut-In might while away many a weary hour by studying the art and practicing it on her friends and acquaintances.

After investigating the subject for nearly two years and casting about for some legitimate means of revealing character—or better, palm-reading, for COMFORT readers, an entirely original and very generous plan has been devised by the publishers, which will be fully made known in our next issue.

By this novel plan *every reader of "Comfort" whose subscription for the year 1894 has been paid* will be enabled to become a member of Comfort's Palmistry Club and enabled to have received—free of expense—his life, character and future by the science of Palmistry.

The valuable information and desirable advantages to be gained by joining this most original of all clubs cannot be secured elsewhere for love or money; and as it will be granted to those only who have paid their subscription for the year 1894, every reader should see that he or she is eligible to become a member by sending the money for this year's subscription once, and thus reap all the benefits of the greatest and most generous offer ever made by any publication in any country. The price of "Comfort" will continue same as heretofore—25 cents a year.

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